BERT KUTTNER
E FUTURE OF UNION

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Is Charles Murray a Fraud?

FORSTER'S LETTERS • THE CASE OF LES GELB'S PHOTOGRAPH • 'THE SILENT SCREAM'

THE NEW REPUBLIC

MAR 12 1985

America's Greatest City

by Thomas Geoghegan

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NEWSPAPER

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CORRESPONDENCE

CUOMO QUARREL

To the editors:
Hendrik Hertzberg flatters me (Washington Diarist, TNR, January 21) by choosing me as the totem for the group of people labeled "neoconservatives." Yet Rick writes as if he'd rather stick pins in me than argue with me. I suspect that what has Rick spooked is that he has difficulty explaining cogently where and why he disagrees with neoconservatives. He once told me, for example, that he would like to believe that the invasion of Grenada was the kind of thing that a liberal Democratic administration would have done. Yet he must know that, given the attitudes that prevail among what today are called "liberal Democrats," that thought is preposterous. Where does that leave Rick?

In attacking my article in the January *Commentary*, the closest Rick comes to a substantive point is to suggest that I accused Mario Cuomo of advocating totalitarianism. My point was that "the great enthusiasm for Cuomo's speech only reflected the Democrats' penchant for hollow rhetoric," but that if Cuomo's words were taken as more than mere rhetoric, their meaning was quite wrongheaded. Sound arguments can be brought in favor of the welfare state against its laissez-faire detractors, but the idea that the nation should be thought of as a family is not one of them. That idea carries us a crucial step toward accepting the primacy of "society" over the individual, a cornerstone of totalitarian ideologies.

Should Cuomo's words be taken that seriously? Perhaps not, but he has been described as a different kind of politician, one who "should be president" because he has "a lot of [ideas]" and "enjoys speculative intellectual talk for its own sake." Who said this? No less an authority than Rick Hertzberg, right there on the Diarist page, on June 6, 1983.

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK
Wheaton, Maryland

Hendrik Hertzberg replies:
The fact that the "family" metaphor implicitly recognizes that a social good may sometimes take precedence over an individual inclination hardly justifies smearing Mario Cuomo as a protototalitarian. That recognition, after all, is the starting point for every political philosophy, except maybe the more extreme forms of anarchism. Either we're all totalitarians, or Muravchik's logic is as weak as his language is abusive.

A RABBI'S RETORT

To the editors:
In "How Not to Overcome" (TNR, January 21) I am described as one who signed as a host "on a long list of old friends of left totalitarianisms for a counter-inaugural testimonial in honor of Jesse Jackson." Then followed this sentence: "Someone who does that cannot lead his people in what would be at best a difficult liaison." Does what?

First, the counter-inaugural ball was not a "testimonial in honor of Jesse Jackson" as you reported. It was a ball-cum-fund-raising sponsored by the Center for Constitutional Rights to honor the work of the center. Jesse Jackson was only a, and I suppose the, guest speaker. A world of difference.

Second, other listed hosts for this event include such luminaries as Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Bishop Paul Moore, Representative Ron Dellums, Councilmember Ruth Messinger, David Dinkins, William Styron, and Grace Paley. Does the author of your editorial believe that their capacity to lead is equally impaired by virtue of their identification with this counter-inaugural ball, or is that incapacitation only applicable to rabbis vis-à-vis their Jewish constituency?

Third, not only is the Center for Constitutional Rights not identified, it is alluded to as something nefarious. In fact, the CCR is a responsible organization created to counter the resistance to the freedom movement of the early 1960s. It works on behalf of anti-war activists, native Americans, blacks, women, and others seeking to change United States policies and structures. Some very distinguished Americans are part of CCR, including Arthur Kinoy, Morton Stavis, Robert Boehm, Peter Weiss and William Kuntsler.

BALFOUR BRICKNER
New York, New York

The editors reply:
The ball was in honor of Jesse Jackson. Rabbi Brickner's defense, particularly his list of "distinguished Americans" in the last paragraph, proves our point.

WHAT MOSHER DID

To the editors:
I was disturbed to read (Notebook, TNR, February 4) that the editors consider Michael Weiskopf's *Washington Post* series on infanticide in China a "vindication" of Stanford graduate student Stephen Mosher. Mosher was dropped from the graduate anthropology program after the Chinese government protested his behavior as a visiting scholar in their country and threatened to close the door to other field workers unless he was disciplined for what they claimed to be unethical and illegal activities.

The truth of his assertion that provincial authorities employed infanticide as a means of birth control was never in question. The Chinese appeared to have been upset that Mosher chose first to publish his findings not in an American scholarly journal, but in a Taiwanese newspaper, and that a certain amount of his research was based on sources obtained by bribing minor officials. Beijing charged that Mosher had also engaged in black-market currency transfers and the smuggling of ancient artifacts from the country. These accusations were at the heart of the controversy; and Stanford's decision to expel Mosher was presumably based on the merits of that case. The truth of the matter, however, remains hidden, for Mosher has himself never revealed the nature of the proceeding or the evidence presented at the hearing conducted by the "senior members of his profession." Any "vindication" ought to come from this source. It remains for Mosher to demonstrate that he is merely a victim of unfair persecution, and the Weiskopf piece is irrelevant to that.

CHANDOS BROWN
Hartford, Connecticut

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FROM WASHINGTON

PRODUCTIVE PREDATORS

It is almost 50 years since a lawyer named Adolph A. Berle and an economist named Gardiner C. Means published *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, a book that Stuart Chase in THE NEW REPUBLIC called "epoch-shattering." The authors demonstrated that economic power in America was being concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer corporations. They also showed that this corporate power was no longer being wielded by the stockholders but instead by professional managers. In the ideology-laden 1930s, their first claim was easily accepted, even by those who thought it epoch-shattering, as just some additional evidence that monopoly was the inevitable destiny of capitalism. The second proposition was somewhat harder to take, for its corollary was the end of the cherished idea taken from Marx of a capitalist "ruling class."

But as time went on, the fate of the two hypotheses was reversed. With the rise of new companies and whole new industries, concentration seemed to loosen and economic power to become more dispersed, while the managers were finally and unquestionably in the corporate saddle. (Very few Fortune 500 corporations have a discreet ownership group, let alone an owning family. Old families like the Rockefellers and the Mellons are still enormously rich, but they actually control little of industrial significance. The same fate probably awaits the families of more recent industrial geniuses.)

For a long time, this development was thought quite satisfactory. It appeared to cut the rapacious class of coupon clippers down to size while enhancing the sway of professionals whose conception of self-interest was thought broad enough to include some notions of communal good. Of course, even when Berle and Means wrote, the shareholder base of American corporations was quite wide. What with "people's capitalism" and mutual funds and pension funds and IRAs and Keoghs, it has become far wider still. In fact, this wide diffusion of stock ownership is what made the alienation of property rights and property prerogatives from the shareholders possible in the first place. The managers' power was based on the powerlessness of the owners. And so how have the managers behaved?

Berle and Means thought they might become plunderers in their own right, and some of them have. Greedy and inept managers have been blamed, with some justice, for the deterioration of our heavy industry, the forfeiting of competitive advantages to the Japanese and other Asian competitors, and the short-sighted cupidity of our energy providers.

These days, though, we are asked to take pity on beleaguered corporate managers, as some of the more vulnerable and culpable of them find their jobs threatened by corporate takeovers. The attacks are made possible by the mechanism of proxy voting, which Berle and Means thought simply ritualistic, the symbolic annual acquiescence of passive ownership to the "power without property" (as Berle called it in a later book) of managerial elites.

The source of these attacks is a new class of big rich in our society who are able to deploy financial resources sufficient to wage war against managers hitherto protected by the inertia and submissiveness of the people and institutions holding their stock. The members of this new class are not the clubbable sorts corporate America is used to. They are mostly outsiders, cagey and secretive. Most of their money is new; in the case of the Texans a tiny bit older. The cover of *Business Week* March 4 depicts these raiders of corporations as masked bandits. The March 4 *Time* cover shows T. Boone Pickens, Mesa Petroleum's ardent if somewhat indiscriminate pursuer of what he considers undervalued corporate properties, as a sly card shark. The March 11 *Forbes* cover is a parody of Eduard Munch's horrific painting "The Scream," with a headline lamenting, "Why is no one safe?" ("Predators emerged from under rocks and began to prey on healthy businesses. Is there no stopping them? Will they devour us all?")

The preying was going on for a long time before the Carl Icahns and Boone Pickenses came on the scene, but back then it was one huge corporation devouring another. This provoked interest but little outrage, except from the left. It is only with the dramatic appearance of the private raider that the takeover game suddenly has come to be viewed by the business world itself not as a spectator sport but as a morality play.

The script of this play miscasts both villains and victims. The putative victim, the traditional corporate leadership, has in truth made itself insecure by treating the stockholders so contemptuously. The managerial class has increasingly appropriated corporate assets as if those assets had no real owners, as if those assets did not pay its exorbitant salaries, and as if in the end managers were responsible to no one.

The great grievance against the raiders is that they force management to focus on short-term performance in order to keep share prices up and ward off takeovers. Managers are happy enough to claim bonuses based on short-term performance when it's positive. But more fundamentally, this notion that the stockholders don't really know what's good for them—and a high share price isn't it—is exactly the attitude that has given corporate raiders the opportunity they need.

No one need pretend that the corporate raiders are animated by benevolent motives to argue that their impact will be mostly salutary. Where smugness and inattention ruled, there will now be concern and even some nervousness. Why shouldn't custodians of hundreds of millions or billions of dollars of other people's invested money, their savings, be a little nervous? Our system only works if it delivers a fair return on owners' capital, in dividends and in appreciated value. If a raider offers significantly more than the present market price for a corporation's shares,

continued on page 40

The usual author of TRB is on vacation this week. This column was written by Martin Peretz.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MARCH 25, 1985

NICARAGUAN MOMENT

If there is still a chance for a peaceful outcome in the Nicaraguan civil war, it lies in the compromise settlement proposed in these pages last week by Arturo Cruz, leader of the Nicaraguan democratic opposition. First, the *contras* should proclaim a unilateral cease-fire. And second, the Sandinistas must restore civil rights and allow free elections. This implies, of course, that the United States must renounce any intention of forcibly removing the Sandinistas from power. Pressure should be immediately brought to bear on the *contras* to produce the cease-fire. The question is: How to get the Sandinistas to take the second step?

Like it or not, part of the answer is to resume American support for the *contras* if Sandinista concessions are not forthcoming. The Nicaraguan leadership currently shows no inclination to agree to the Cruz terms, and only continued *contra* pressure is likely to make them change their minds. They will certainly not change their minds if they think the United States is ready to end its aid to the *contras*.

Support for the *contras*, however, doesn't mean swallowing President Reagan's romantic myth-making about "freedom fighters." In Reagan's Manichaean view of Nicaragua, the *contras* resemble the French resistance fighters while the Sandinistas run a "communist totalitarian state." In fact, neither is true. The fractious *contra* movement is led by many ex-Somocistas (its military chief, Enrique Bermudez, was Somoza's defense attaché in Washington). And the Nicaraguan government has compiled a better human rights record than some Latin dictatorships we *aren't* trying to overthrow. Even if the president's assessment of the *contras* were correct, it does not follow that their victory would be followed by democracy. The Sandinistas—former "freedom fighters" themselves—are proof of that. In fact, the comparison to the French resistance is valid in only one way: the *contras* have no hope of victory unless American forces step in to help them.

What is happening in Nicaragua, then, is a civil war—and like most civil wars it is a nasty affair, with little restrain on either side. This does not mean, however, that the United States has to sit things out. In Nicaragua, keeping our hands clean will do little to help the Nicaraguan people, and might well result in the consolidation of a Sandinista dictatorship. In two or three years, Nicaragua will effectively be a part of Eastern Europe—like Cuba. The prospects for democracy's survival in Costa Rica and for security in Honduras and Panama will become even bleaker. We must use the *contras* to push the Sandinistas, to force them to do what they promised to do when they took power in July 1979: establish a pluralist political system, a mixed economy, and a non-aligned foreign policy. A force of 15,000 men will not topple the men who control the largest and best-equipped army in Central America, but it can present them with an extremely unpalatable option: long, miserable years of bloodshed, economic distress, and exhaustion. Faced with that, the Sandinistas might just choose peace.

But the Reagan administration must make it clear that the Sandinistas have a choice. Indeed, convincing President Ortega on this point is the hardest task the administration would face if it accepted the Cruz proposals. Nicaraguans have every reason to be suspicious of a country that imposed an armed occupation on them several times,

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and foisted on them a long and brutal dictatorship. To allay these suspicions, the United States must show good faith. And to show good faith, it must first come up with something it has lacked up to this point: a clear, coherent policy. Just as in Lebanon, administration policy on Nicaragua has slid confusingly from stance to stance: first we were hindering Nicaraguan aid to El Salvadoran rebels, then pressuring the Sandinistas on human rights, then "removing" the present government altogether. And just as with Star Wars, administration policy toward the *contras* has vacillated between contradictory rationales: Are the rebels a bargaining chip to be negotiated away at the right moment, or are they priceless assets to be kept at all costs? Until this contradiction is resolved, we can't expect to convince anyone of our good intentions.

We think the Cruz proposals—which call, incidentally, for keeping President Ortega in office while new and free elections are being held—are prudent, clear, and straightforward. They call for the best good-faith gesture possible: a unilateral *contra* cease-fire, something which is within the administration's power to produce. If the Sandinistas spurn the offer, then the war will continue. But with a demonstration of American resolve on the one hand, and American good faith on the other, the administration may yet convince the Sandinistas to compromise.

The Press

Hand-me-down Scoop

ON FEBRUARY 13 *New York Times* reporter Leslie Gelb reported that the United States had contingency plans to place nuclear depth bombs (like anti-submarine depth charges, only nuclear) in Canada, Iceland, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico and that these countries were upset at the prospect—particularly as they had never been consulted by the United States. Gelb's story was particularly infuriating to the Reagan administration not only because the *Times* spurned Secretary of State George Shultz's personal request not to run the story, but also because Gelb was the director of the State Department's Bureau of Political Military Affairs during the Carter administration. Gelb's successor, Lt. Gen. John Chain, retaliated by ordering his staff not to talk to Gelb anymore and by removing Gelb's photograph from display in the State Department.

Chain was courteous enough to provide a public explanation for his actions. He put a little notice in place of Gelb's photograph, inscribed in beautiful copperplate handwriting, that read: "Removed For Cause. The P. M. Director, 1977 to 1979, did willingly, willfully, and knowingly publish, in 1985, classified information the release of which is harmful and damaging to the country." (Last week, after taking much abuse in the press, Chain restored Gelb to the good graces of the State Department. Gelb's picture, though, remains in storage.)

A lively debate has since ensued over whether disclosing contingency plans to put nuclear depth bombs on distant islands was in fact telling the Russians something new, and whether the countries involved had good reason to be taking umbrage. It seems to me, however, that General Chain has inadvertently raised important questions, not about the smaller details of nuclear war plans, but about the practice of journalism in America.

FIRST, WHY IS someone whose picture was hanging on a State Department wall working for *The New York Times*? The *Times*'s policy that government experience such as Gelb's can only enrich a reporter's understanding of the issues has already backfired once in the previous year. Last summer the *Post* scooped the *Times* by reporting that Carter administration officials, including Gelb, had prepared a memorandum in 1978 titled "Covert Action to Counter Anti-Neutron Bomb Forum." Gelb, of course, couldn't report the story because the memo is still classified. Two days later, the *Times* ran a lame follow-up story in which Gelb was interviewed by one of his colleagues. The story reported Gelb as saying "he did not know then, and does not know now, whether any covert effort was actually approved and carried out."

Second, and more important, did General Chain's heavy-handed interior decorating disclose, as *Times* editor A.M. Rosenthal asserted, "a lack of understanding of a free press and an astounding distortion of the facts"? General Chain surely knew, said Rosenthal, that "the story *The New York Times* published contained no information that had not already been published and debated in the countries named in the story. The only people from whom this information had been withheld were the American people."

Withheld? By whom? It is true that the story had already appeared in a multitude of newspapers outside the United States. But it was, in fact, the American media itself that "withheld" the story by showing a marked reluctance to have anything to do with it.

The main source for Gelb's article was William Arkin, a 28-year-old former Army intelligence analyst who in 1982 wrote a book with me on nuclear war plans. Arkin is now nuclear weapons researcher at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington. Last year Arkin obtained a nine-year-old secret document relating to the Pentagon's Nuclear Weapons Deployment Plan—a classified memorandum, approved each year by the president, authorizing the deployment of nuclear weapons outside the United States. The document listed eight U.S. bases in the Azores, Bermuda, Canada, Iceland, the Philippines, Spain, Diego Garcia, and Puerto Rico, where the Pentagon had contingency plans to send, or maybe even had sent (no one knows because the Pentagon won't talk about it), B-57 nuclear depth bombs, each nearly the size of the Hiroshima bomb. Arkin tried to interest *Washington Post* reporter Walter Pincus in the document.

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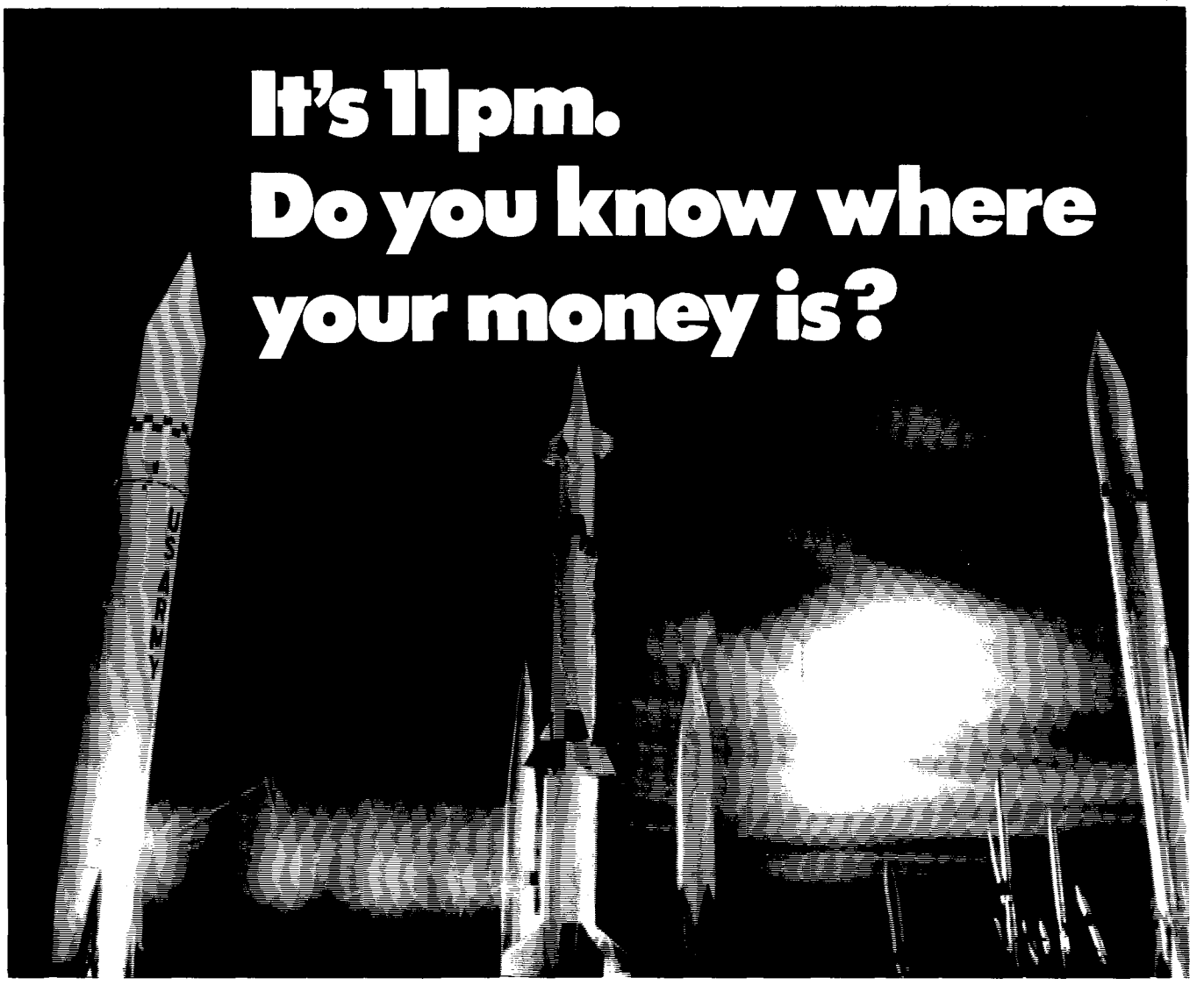

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Pincus said later that he was skeptical about the newsworthiness of the deployment plan. He didn't think the depth bombs would be used in a nuclear war because they would blow out important underwater sensors used for tracking submarines. "I don't think the [depth bomb] plan is relevant to nuclear war; it's an interesting footnote," said Pincus.

Pincus has a point. If the idea is to deploy these weapons in a superpower crisis, one would imagine they are low down on the list of priorities. But Arkin argues that it is just these kind of tactical, rather than strategic, nuclear weapons that could be the first to be used by a president who has decided to cross the nuclear threshold. The policy behind the contigency planning is therefore of great import and should be a matter of public debate. Nevertheless, Pincus declined to write an article on the document.

In December Arkin was invited to give a lecture in Iceland, where nuclear issues are a constant source of political tension and debate. Iceland is an active member of NATO and hosts a large U.S. base at Keflavík. But Iceland, by agreement with the United States, does not allow nuclear weapons on its territory. Arkin met with Iceland's prime minister, Steingrimur Hermannsson, and told him of the U.S. plans to deploy 48 nuclear depth bombs at Keflavík in what appeared to be a clear breach of the "non-nuclear" agreement between the two countries. Next day, reports of the meeting were splashed all over the Icelandic papers. Other reports went out on Swedish radio and, as usual, a translation of the item was made by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service and copies put into the State Department's press room. Nothing appeared in the American media.

IN THE BEGINNING of January, Arkin told me that Bermuda was on the list. Impressed by the absurdity of nuclear weapons on Britain's holiday island in the sun, I wrote a story for *The Observer* in London. In passing, I mentioned the names of other countries on the "depth bomb" list. *The Observer* considered it of mild interest, placing it in a single column in the middle of page six.

Next day a reporter from the *Royal Gazette* in Bermuda picked up *The Observer* story and splashed it on the front page with a comment from Premier John Swan, saying he knew nothing of the plans. He might not have known, of course, because Bermuda's security is in the hands of its colonial masters, Britain. The Bermudians took umbrage anyway. The *Royal Gazette* warned President Reagan that he "should be careful to preserve Bermuda's goodwill."

The *Royal Gazette* reporter happened to be a stringer for the Canadian press and he passed on the information that Canada was on the list. For the next two weeks the Canadian papers were full of Arkin and his discovery. The chief of Canada's defense staff, General Gerard Theriault, confirmed the existence of the U.S. plan on January 10.

Finally, on February 1, the *Times* reporter in Ottawa, Christopher Wren, mentioned the row in Canada as a footnote to a story about Canadian reaction to Star Wars. The next week Arkin met with Gelb and gave him a copy of the once-secret plan. The *Times* finally ran the story on page one a week later.

Poor General Chain. His excuse for removing Gelb's picture is not worth an empty picture frame. And what will undoubtedly make matters worse, as everyone in journalism knows, is that a banned or barred reporter quickly becomes the favorite of "leakers" inside the bureaucracy who are encouraged to whisper their secrets over the phone or mail classified documents in unmarked envelopes. Watch for more scoops from the Gelb keyboard—as long as they don't involve him personally, of course.

PETER PRINGLE

Peter Pringle is a Washington correspondent for *The Observer*, London.

The lurid logic of 'The Silent Scream.'

RIGHT-TO-LIFE PORN

THE SILENT SCREAM has the appeal of a snuff movie. Its notoriety, like that of the controversial porno films of a few years ago in which unknown actresses were ostensibly killed on camera, derives from the uncertainty about whether the viewer is witnessing the actual murder of a human being. The already-famous film, which pro-life groups have screened at the White House and distributed to every member of Congress, features an apparently unprecedented visual depiction of a sonic scan of a woman's womb during an abortion. But while snuff films held out the possibility of murder in order to titillate the trenchcoat crowd inured to every other variety of immorality, *The Silent Scream* insists that it depicts a murder in order to outrage a public that now tolerates abortion. The unequivocal claim makes the film emotionally powerful, so powerful in fact that it undermines the pro-life position it is supposed to advance.

The film builds its case slowly. After the inappropriate horror B-movie title rolls, the narrator, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, appears. Nathanson is a former abortionist who says he presided over 60,000 abortions at his New York City clinic in the mid-1970s. He explains how knowledge about the human fetus has grown rapidly. Black-and-white footage of a well-developed fetus is shown. It is moving slightly with its thumb apparently in its mouth. "The unborn child," Nathanson says, "is simply another human being, another member of the human community, indistinguishable in every way from any of us."

Nathanson returns with a lineup of seven plastic models, each of a fetus at different stages of development. Our identification with the humanity of this fetus is supposed to grow with these models. Then we cut to the antiseptic

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interior of an abortion clinic, where an unidentifiable woman lies on a table with her legs spread. Nathanson explains how the abortionist dilates the cervix to gain access to the womb. The juxtaposition works; the film begins to make you uneasy.

As the sonogram is shown again, Nathanson says that what will follow is typical of the 4,000 abortions done every day in the United States. He points out the head of the fetus, its eyes, its ribs. Its heart is beating 140 times a minute, he says. The details are hard to discern in what looks to me like a satellite weather photo. But with Nathanson's explanations, it's not hard to picture the human characteristics of the fetus.

There is a flash across the screen. Nathanson says that this is the abortionist's instrument probing for the fetus. The instrument, he explains, has been colored so that it will show up on film. There is movement. Nathanson says that the fetus, sensing the intrusion, has recoiled. Its heartbeat has increased. He claims its mouth is open to scream. When the abortion is over, Nathanson concludes, "All we see remaining are simply the shards, the broken fragments, the pieces of tissue which document there was once a living defenseless tiny human being here."

WHAT WE HAVE SEEN is disturbing, but not only for the reasons Nathanson intends. For anyone who didn't know it, *The Silent Scream* demonstrates convincingly that a fetus is a living being with human attributes. But the film proves too much. If what we have seen was exactly like the killing of a defenseless human being, why did Nathanson stand by and watch it? Would it be morally acceptable for Mike Wallace to go on the set of a snuff film and tape an actual murder so that "60 Minutes" could ignite public outrage about the practice?

I recognize that this is an ugly kind of argument I am making. Such casual talk of killing people, all too common in contemporary political calculations, is repulsive. I develop this point precisely because *The Silent Scream* allows us no choice. And not to follow the argument of *The Silent Scream* to its logical conclusion is not to take the film or the anti-abortion movement seriously.

Nathanson might respond to the "60 Minutes" analogy by saying something like this: because abortion is now legal, making the sonogram was the most I could do without interfering with the woman's (current) right to have an abortion. But this will hardly do. If the United States government, by allowing legal abortions, is now condoning 4,000 murders a day, civil disobedience, if not armed rebellion, would certainly be called for. If 4,000 illegal immigrants or 4,000 homosexuals or 4,000 Republicans were being killed each day, we like to think we would protest—and more vigorously than just by holding peaceful vigils outside the concentration camps.

Indeed in such a horrific society, non-violent resistance would constitute—like pacifism in the face of Nazi genocide—a profound moral failing. The most admirable response would be to organize a clandestine violent opposition to hinder if not end the mass murder. Anyone who firebombed Belsen would have been, in our judgment today, a hero, not an "extremist." Thus the people who firebomb abortion clinics are at least being true to the message of *The Silent Scream*. They are the only ones who, in the midst of what some anti-abortion groups call the "American Holocaust," are not acting like good Germans.

By disowning the bombers, the anti-abortion movement reveals it does not take its own rhetoric as seriously as it wants the public to do. And Nathanson's appearance in the film is devastatingly ironic confirmation of the point. By his own admission he has overseen the killing of 60,000 "member[s] of the human community, indistinguishable in every way from any of us." Nathanson has criticized other anti-abortionists for resorting facilely to the Nazi analogy, but he cannot escape responsibility for his own language. If we take him at his word, he has committed crimes on the magnitude of a Nazi war criminal. If we take *The Silent Scream* as literally as its sponsors say we must, we can have but one conclusion: Dr. Mengele has emerged from the Paraguayan bush and, citing what he learned at Dachau, is fervently urging us to support the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And his testimony has been warmly welcomed at the White House.

This, of course, is preposterous. We can be sure Nathanson does not think of himself as the moral equivalent of a war criminal, his own rhetoric notwithstanding. Similarly, we can be sure President Reagan does not really believe he presides over a country as murderous as Nazi Germany. (Talk about blaming America first.) Reagan and Nathanson can live with themselves only by absolving themselves from the indictment of their own logic. They can only retain our respect by conceding that abortion is not murder.

THIS DOESN'T DESTROY the anti-abortion case. It merely makes it debatable. The double irony of *The Silent Scream* is that Nathanson himself has persuasively made this point. In 1979 he wrote *Aborting America*, an honest and thoughtful book about his conversion to the anti-abortion cause. "What are we to call the entity that lies at the heart of the debate?" he asked. He rejected "unborn baby or unborn child," saying that "the anti-abortionists would load the verbal dice on us" by using these terms. "We are not here talking about the type of life that we find in a six year old," Nathanson wrote then. "It certainly is biological life, but life of a different order." He also wrote, "We are not talking about intentional and unjustified slaying of a human being." The word "murder," he said, "should be dropped from the abortion issue, along with 'killing' and 'homocide.' "

Nathanson's general point in *Aborting America* was that life is a continuum from conception on. The fetus might be life of a different order, he argued, but as life it deserved as much protection as possible. This is a fair point. But it is equally logical to contend that "life of a different order" can be treated differently than human life.

Here the lines of the abortion debate are clear. The anti-abortion camp believes that this different order of life is

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still so close to human that a pregnant woman should under almost no circumstances—or no circumstances at all—eliminate it. The pro-abortion movement believes that a woman should not be required to subordinate other aspects of her life to the needs of a being that is not fully human. In deciding on abortion, these are the two positions we must choose between, a choice that *The Silent Scream* almost succeeds in obscuring.

JEFFERSON MORLEY

The case for cutting off South Africa.

DIVESTMENT IMPERATIVE

SOUTH AFRICAN president P. W. Botha has long been known as a man with a volatile temper. But three years ago he issued a warning to the anti-apartheid forces that went beyond his usual outbursts. In a major speech opening parliament, he said, "Something will happen in South Africa that the proponents of violence cannot even dream of. They don't know what they are going to reap." Later he added even more chillingly, "A big silence and desolation will come over many parts of South Africa."

In the past six months, the country's growing internal violence has brought Botha's threat closer to reality. A brief lull in the nationwide unrest ended in late February, when the police opened fire at the crossroads squatter camp near Cape Town. Since September, more than 200 people have been killed, and another 3,000 arrested—including nine prominent black political and labor leaders who will be tried for treason and who could face the death penalty. Some 500,000 black workers staged a two-day general strike in November, the largest in history, and another 400,000 black students have boycotted classes to protest their segregated "gutter education." The uprising is a bitter, convincing repudiation of the "reform" proposals that Pretoria put forward with much fanfare last year. South Africa is sliding remorselessly toward the same violence that already prevails in Namibia, its colony to the north, where the apartheid army is fighting a full-scale guerrilla war that may already have killed 10,000 people.

Steadily increasing turbulence is the reality against which foreign investment and bank loans to South Africa must be considered. Those who defend economic involvement attempt to portray a nation moving toward genuine reform; investments, they argue, help this evolutionary process by promoting economic growth and more enlightened racial practices. This assertion, which has been made for more than 20 years, is today hollower than ever. South Africa is moving in the opposite direction, toward a state of war in which foreign investment strengthens the strategic position of one side.

Up-to-date Western technology is probably the most vital benefit that the economic links provide to Botha's government. The regime has taken advantage of the Reagan administration's relaxed restrictions on sensitive exports, and has acquired powerful Control Data and Sperry computers, which are functioning in military-related enterprises. The three huge, futuristic Sasol plants that convert coal into oil, which South Africa needs desperately, are being built partly by Fluor, another U.S. corporation. American contractors are also working under shadowy circumstances in the nuclear industry. Bank loans to South Africa have been used, directly or indirectly, to finance a massive military buildup. The International Monetary Fund's $1.1 billion loan two years ago exactly equaled the increase in military spending from 1980 to 1982.

WESTERN ECONOMIC involvement also helps to maintain the morale of the majority of the white people who still support apartheid. Whites are by now used to the feeble, ritual criticisms of their system by Western governments. But they are surrounded by vivid evidence of the American economic stake in apartheid, including Ford and Chevrolet autos, branches of Holiday Inns, outposts of Colonel Sanders, even Kellogg's Corn Flakes. All of this encourages them to believe that America will continue to stand by them as the war widens.

In the United States, the diminishing number of people who support investment argue that black South Africans actually want continued economic links. The State Department has taken to quoting a survey by a white South African academic that purportedly shows that three-quarters of blacks support investment. The State Department fails to note that South Africa is a police state, and that it is a crime to advocate disinvestment. A few years back, Bishop Tutu was forbidden to travel outside the country after he hinted that he favored limited economic pressure. If he had been a less prominent figure, the security police doubtless would have been harder on him.

The popular movements with bases outside the country, principally the African National Congress, have called for sanctions for decades. Nelson Mandela, the ANC leader who has been imprisoned for 20 years, is the most popular man in the country, and would be the most likely president of a nonracial, democratic South Africa. Those movements that operate openly inside, such as the United Democratic Front, a coalition of 600 community organizations, unions, and other groups representing 1.5 million people, have to be circumspect, but they privately favor increased economic pressure as well. Bishop Tutu, who enjoys greater immunity after winning the Nobel Peace Prize, says he will publicly advocate sanctions if there is no genuine change within 18 to 24 months. Zulu chief Gatsha Buthelezi is the only black leader with any appreciable following who still opposes sanctions; his support (which has been dwindling) is due largely to his resistance to Pretoria's plans to strip Zulu-speaking South Africans of their citizenship as part of the notorious Bantustan

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policy, rather than to his stand on foreign investment.

Black South Africans recognize that the argument that U.S. companies improve conditions for the 70,000 black people they employ is exaggerated. It has been eight years since the Reverend Leon Sullivan introduced his code for the 350 U.S. corporations that do business there. The Sullivan Code requires desegregated canteens and restrooms in the work place and other mild changes. Only about one-third of the enterprises have even bothered to sign the code, and not all of the signers comply with it.

Some Americans who lean toward disinvestment assume it will cause blacks to suffer more in the short run; they hesitate before what they regard as a problematic moral decision. But black South Africans and the whites who support them have made that difficult choice already. They will continue their resistance, despite the risk of even greater anguish. South Africa is heading deeper into a bloody civil war whether there are sanctions or not. Chief Albert Lutuli, who in 1960 was the first black South African to win the Nobel Peace Prize, wrote then: "The economic boycott of South Africa will entail undoubted hardship for Africans. We do not doubt that. But if it is a method which shortens the day of bloodshed, the suffering to us will be a price we are willing to pay. In any case, we suffer already."

IN AMERICA, disinvestment has spread far beyond the college campuses where it first became an issue. Already five states and many cities, including New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, have passed disinvestment legislation. But even the staunchest advocates realize it will not happen soon. This spring Congress will consider legislation on economic sanctions. The proposed laws still fall short of a total economic quarantine, though they are stiffer than previous efforts that failed to pass. They ban new investment, bank loans to government institutions, and the importing of the gold coins called Krugerrands. As an unprecedented protest campaign against apartheid spreads across America, the chance for passage seems good.

Even such part-way pressures are enormously helpful. Protest here receives a great deal of publicity inside South Africa. When Senator Lowell Weicker was arrested in front of the embassy in Washington, the story was on the front pages in Johannesburg. Such news shakes the confidence of the government and its supporters. But there are more tangible benefits as well. In 1974 the United Mine Workers protested to the U.S. Commission of Customs that South African coal was produced by "slave labor" and should not be imported; and dockworkers in Mobile, Alabama, refused to unload the coal. The apartheid regime moved quickly, repealing some legislation under which black workers who quit their jobs without permission could be tried as criminals. There had been 17,000 prosecutions under the laws the previous year.

Since then, the deepening American economic involvement in South Africa has made that government even more vulnerable to pressure. In December the regime released 16 detained union leaders the same day the protests in Washington had compelled Ronald Reagan to meet with Bishop Tutu. No doubt Pretoria would prefer to dispense with the remnants of the independent judicial system and crush the labor unions and the opposition English-language press. The foreign vigilance has helped keep open at least some political space, and has prevented more people from being imprisoned or murdered.

Economic pressure from overseas can help restrain the regime's even more deadly policies. Wretched health conditions in the poor, overcrowded Bantustans, where more than half of all black people are required to live, have been worsened by the continent-wide drought. These people, whom the regime has called "superfluous," are disproportionately the young, the old, and the ill. Infant mortality rates in the Bantustans, which form an archipelago of misery scattered around the nation's periphery, are already higher than in even the poorest independent countries in the rest of Africa. Nearly three million blacks under 15 suffer from malnutrition. One-quarter of black children born in the Bantustans die before their first birthday. Even modest changes in the Bantustan system could mean the difference between life and death for thousands.

Economic sanctions are the last chance to end the violence spreading across southern Africa. Although it may seem paradoxical, disinvestment would also be in the best long-term interests of those South Africans, nearly all of them white, who continue to support apartheid. In part, they fight because they are convinced that defeat will mean their violent expulsion from Africa. In fact, the African National Congress, the leading liberation movement, insists that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white." But so far, white South Africans have had little inducement to reexamine their fearful and mistaken views, to learn that their fellow Africans are not the threat that they imagine. Increased economic pressure will moderate their intransigence, and improve the prospects for genuine negotiations.

The most recent protests here in America have forced Botha to make some concessions, proving again that pressure from outside is more than simply a moral gesture. South Africa announced that it will suspend forced resettlement, a policy under which 3.5 million people have been dumped into the Bantustans. Up to one million more people who were scheduled for deportation have gained a reprieve. The regime also dropped plans to move 125,000 people from three black ghettos in Cape Town. These moves still leave the basic apartheid system intact. But they are promising signs that even more pressure, along with the courageous resistance inside the country, could force more substantive changes.

IT IS TIME the South African crisis stopped being a left vs. right issue here in America. Thirty-five Republican representatives recently broke with the administration by openly threatening Pretoria that they might support sanctions. The letter they released received a great deal of attention inside South Africa, and it did more good than

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four years of the Reagan administration's "constructive" whispering in P.W. Botha's ear. Americans of all political persuasions are starting to realize that there is a terrifying sense of urgency about South Africa's slide toward the edge. A recent Carnegie Endowment study speculated that the regime could have already stockpiled "enough material for between 15 and 25 nuclear explosives of the size used on Hiroshima." And where else in the world does a national leader threaten his own people with atomic weapons or something similarly catastrophic?

JAMES NORTH

James North spent four years traveling throughout southern Africa. His book *Freedom Rising* will be published by Macmillan in April.

The intellectual mugging of the Great Society.

LOSING FAITH IN 'LOSING GROUND'

BY ROBERT GREENSTEIN

FEW BOOKS have received more political attention this year than Charles Murray's *Losing Ground*. The book has emboldened conservatives who attack the welfare state and unsettled liberals who defend it. A relentless attack on federal poverty programs, the book argues that these programs have done far more harm than good and should be abolished. Murray advocates elimination of every federal benefit program for the non-elderly poor, with the sole exception of unemployment insurance. From food stamps to Medicaid, from public assistance for dependent children to disability insurance and workmen's compensation for incapacitated workers, from housing assistance for low-income families to nutrition supplements for poor pregnant women, Murray would end them all.

The book bases these recommendations on mounds of data—data arranged to show that the poverty programs not only failed to accomplish their goals, but actually exacerbated the very problems they were designed to solve. The guts of the book—more than 100 pages of data analysis—attempt to demonstrate that evidence of failure is inescapable and overwhelming. Even some who are uncomfortable with Murray's call to rip out the safety net have found his data disturbing and have been shaken by the book.

But before Murray's view that the programs have failed becomes the new conventional wisdom, careful examination of his use of the facts and figures is very much in order. Could it be that *Losing Ground*, with its endless recital of statistics, actually rests on deceptive numbers juggling? That Murray has, in the service of a radical political agenda, consistently omitted or concealed critical facts and research findings that do not support his case? Close scrutiny of Murray's data suggests that this is precisely what has occurred. This is the untold story behind *Losing Ground*.

Consider, for example, the "case of Harold and Phyllis." Harold and Phyllis are a fictional couple that Murray creates to illustrate one of his principal contentions—that the social programs have led to unemployment and illegitimacy among blacks by encouraging the poor to live off welfare rather than to work. Murray presents Harold and Phyllis as a young couple facing fundamental decisions about their lives. Phyllis is pregnant, and the couple must decide whether to get married. More important, they must also decide whether Harold should take a tedious minimum-wage job, or whether Phyllis should go on welfare and Harold should live off her benefits rather than work.

In 1960, according to Murray, their decision is clear-cut. He presents household financial data showing that Harold and Phyllis are much better off if Harold works, he and Phyllis get married, and Phyllis does not go on welfare. By 1970, however, the incentives have shifted. Murray's family budget now shows that they are actually a bit better off collecting welfare than if they get married and Harold takes a job. Here, in a nutshell, is the core of the Murray thesis. The "rules of the game" have changed, Murray tells us, and the "incentives" have shifted in the wrong direction. This is the reason that poverty didn't decline in the 1970s and that the number of employed young black men has dropped.

The Harold and Phyllis example is at the heart of Murray's case and is critical to the entire book. It is also flatly wrong. First, Murray's family budgets for 1960 and 1970 are *not* based on welfare benefit levels in an average state. Instead, his data is for the state of Pennsylvania, a fact buried in footnotes at the back of the book. Welfare bene-

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fits grew twice as fast in Pennsylvania from 1960 to 1970 as in the nation as a whole. This allows Murray to portray the shift in "incentives" over the decade as being twice as great as they actually were.

Murray makes a second error. In calculating the family's budget if Harold works, Murray incorrectly assumes Phyllis and her child cannot obtain food stamps, even though poor families who work are eligible for food stamps. In figuring the budget if they went on welfare, however, Murray does not make the same mistake and adds in food stamps when computing the family's income. The error makes working, compared to welfare, appear less attractive than it actually was.

When the welfare vs. work comparisons are computed accurately, they show that taking a minimum-wage job was more profitable than going on welfare in most parts of the country in 1970. In some states with low welfare payments, such as southern states, minimum-wage jobs paid almost *twice* as much. If Murray's thesis were correct that perverse welfare incentives spurred the growth of female-headed households and the rise in black unemployment, then these developments should have occurred to a much greater extent in those few high welfare payment states in which adverse "incentives" actually existed than in the low welfare payment states in which the advantages of working were greatest and minimum-wage jobs remained vastly more remunerative than public aid. But there is no such pattern. Female-headed households increased and black employment declined everywhere—regardless of whether state welfare benefits were high or low, or whether the benefits were raised or not.

Murray's argument loses even more force when it's applied to the years after 1970. Although his book is subtitled *American Social Policy 1950-1980*, he never provides a 1980 family budget for Harold and Phyllis. If he had, he would have undermined his case. From 1970 to 1980, the incentives shifted strongly away from welfare and toward work. Beginning in 1969, welfare benefits fell sharply, as states failed to adjust benefits to keep pace with inflation. During the 1970s, benefits in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, the basic public assistance program for single-parent families with children, fell nearly 30 percent in real terms. Even when food stamps and low-income energy assistance are included, benefits to these families dropped about 20 percent.

AT THE SAME TIME, the advantages of working were expanded, through the enactment in 1975 of the earned income tax credit for the working poor. As a result, in 1980—even in Pennsylvania—Harold and Phyllis would have *one-third more income if Harold worked* than if he remained unemployed and Phyllis collected welfare. In most states other than Pennsylvania the advantages of working were even greater by 1980. In Texas Harold and Phyllis would have 100 percent more income if Harold worked. If perverse welfare incentives in the late 1960s actually led to family dissolution and black unemployment, as Murray contends, then these trends should have

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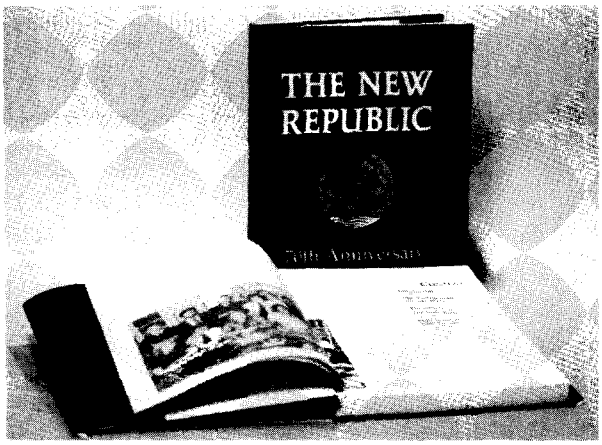

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THE MANHATTAN PROJECT

BACK IN MAY 1982, a little-known scholar from Iowa went to a luncheon symposium at the Manhattan Institute, a small, conservative New York think tank. William Hammett, the president of the Manhattan Institute, had invited the young scholar after reading about a Heritage Foundation pamphlet he'd written called "Safety Nets and the Truly Needy." Hammett liked its provocative argument—that abolishing poverty programs would probably help the poor more than it would hurt them. At the luncheon, he asked the young scholar if he'd like to expand his pamphlet into a book; he offered him the Manhattan Institute's full financial support. The young scholar said that sounded pretty good. Within a couple of months the contracts were signed, the young scholar had been transformed into a Manhattan Institute "Senior Research Fellow," and the book was underway.

The young scholar was Charles Murray, and the book was *Losing Ground*, which is now being called the most important work on poverty and social policy since Michael Harrington's *The Other America*. Though Murray's publisher has printed about 20,000 copies (which sell for $23.95 each) since September, the best indicator of *Losing Ground*'s success is not how many people have read it, but *who* has read it—or at least heard about it. *Losing Ground* has been the subject of dozens of major editorials, columns, and reviews in publications such as *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *The Dallas Morning News*, and THE NEW REPUBLIC—even the Sunday *Times* of London. According to *Washington Post* columnist Meg Greenfield: "No matter what kind of government effort you may argue for these days, in [the poverty] area . . . you are likely to be 'Charles Murrayed,' and that will be the end of the argument. The simple invocation of the book's existence will be taken as an answer to the question." The White House was so impressed by *Losing Ground* that it is now considering Murray for a job as an assistant secretary of Health and Human Services.

How did this statistical tome become such a media event? It was no accident. Murray says himself that the book might never have gotten the coverage it has without the help of a well-funded promotional campaign led by the Manhattan Institute. The success of *Losing Ground* is a case study in how conservative intellectuals have come to dominate the policy debates of recent years.

The Manhattan Institute's promotion of Murray's book is the smooth execution of a strategy first suggested by neoconservative intellectual Irving Kristol. In a 1977 *Wall Street Journal* piece, "On Corporate Philanthropy," Kristol argued that, instead of funding liberal foundations that give grants to left-wingers, businessmen should give to "new class" publicists who favor free enterprise. "You can only beat an idea with another idea, and the war of ideas and ideologies will be won or lost within 'the new class,' not against it," Kristol wrote. He reminded businessmen that "if you decide to go exploring for oil, you find a competent geologist," and urged them to seek out intellectual guides who could direct them to pro-business scholars within the predominantly anti-business new class.

In the case of Murray, it was Hammett who served as "geologist," locating Murray—"he was a nobody . . . we were definitely taking a flier on him," Hammett says—and persuading foundations and corporations to help finance his book. Hammett raised and spent $125,000 for the two-year Murray "flier." Most of that came from two right-wing foundations—Scaife, which gave $75,000, and Olin, which chipped in $25,000. (According to Hammett, a letter of recommendation from Kristol himself helped secure the Olin money.) The $125,000 went for a $35,000 annual stipend for Murray, and for promotional activities both before and after the book's publication.

At a cost of almost $15,000, Hammett sent more than 700 free copies of *Losing Ground* to academics, journalists, and public officials all over the world—including members of Margaret Thatcher's cabinet in Britain. He assigned a public relations specialist named Joan Kennedy Taylor to handle the Murray campaign. She helped Murray line up TV appearances and meetings with editors and academics. She followed up the Institute's mailing of his book with letters to newspapers and magazines. For example, after noting that *U.S. News & World Report* deputy editor Lawrence Maloney had written the magazine's March 26, 1984, cover story on the underclass, she sent him a copy of the book and offered an interview with Murray. Sure enough,

reversed themselves in the 1970s, when the relative advantage of work over welfare increased sharply. They didn't. The number of female-headed households continued to surge, and black employment declined. This is not surprising since benefit programs had little to do with causing these problems.

Another of Murray's central arguments is that, despite significant increases in social program spending, the poverty rate didn't drop from 1968 to 1980. If the programs were successful, Murray says, the poverty rate should have declined. This sounds straightforward enough. But once again, Murray neglects the key facts that contradict his message. For example, the unemployment rate in 1980 was double what it was in 1968. When unemployment goes up, poverty rises along with it. Small wonder that the poverty rate wasn't lower in 1980, a recession year, than in 1968, when unemployment was just 3.6 percent.

The fact that poverty was no higher in 1980 than in 1968, despite the doubling of the unemployment rate, actually provides strong evidence that these programs were helping people who would have otherwise been impoverished by the sluggish economy. Further evidence comes from the Urban Institute. In its study *The Reagan Record*, the Urban Institute found that in 1965, before the poverty programs were expanded, federal benefit programs lifted out of poverty less than half the of those who would have otherwise been poor. By the late 1970s, however, the programs had been broadened and were lifting about 70 per-

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U.S. News's December 24, 1984, cover story, "Welfare in America," devoted considerable space to *Losing Ground*.

The Institute also arranged a seminar about Murray's book last October. Intellectuals and journalists thought to have some influence on the policy debate were enticed to New York to spend a day and a half listening to Murray and discussing his ideas. Participants included Martin Anderson of the Hoover Institution, formerly President Reagan's chief domestic policy adviser; Professor Nathan Glazer of Harvard; Ken Auletta of *The New Yorker*; Charles Peters, editor of *The Washington Monthly*; and the author of THE NEW REPUBLIC's TRB column. (Participants received "honoraria" ranging from $500 to $1,500.) This poverty seminar took place at the New York Athletic Club; participants stayed at the club and at the Park Lane Hotel, where single rooms start at $155 per night. All told, the Manhattan Institute laid out $10,000 for guests' air fares, meals, and lodging.

Hammett got the cash to stage this event from an obscure Indiana-based foundation called the Liberty Fund. Ordinarily, the Liberty Fund limits itself to projects like filming documentaries on the life of Adam Smith and the miracle of free enterprise in Hong Kong. But Hammett, scanning the entire country for sources of funding, shrewdly identified the Liberty Fund as a group that, if approached in the right way, would join him in the Murray project (though he concedes that the Liberty Fund "beefed" about the price of rooms at the Park Lane).

Now the Institute is acting as Murray's booking agent for a nationwide speaking tour. "We're using his time to promote the book," Hammett explains, noting that this is necessary because "a publisher won't do this with a serious nonfiction book." The tour has taken Murray from college campuses in California to Kiwanis Clubs in Kansas City. The Manhattan Institute carefully maps out each visit in advance. Here's part of an itinerary the Institute arranged for Murray's recent visit to Denver: "5:50 p.m., November 11—*The Mike Rosen Show* live with phone-in . . . John McCarty, Vice President, Public Affairs, Adolph Coors Co., will pick you up after show for a 'bite to eat' . . . November 12, 7 p.m., *Herrick Roth's Roundup* Taping . . . Note from JKT [Taylor]: Have jacketed copy of *Losing Ground* with you, just in case, to show on screen."

Murray confesses that the help showered upon him by the Manhattan Insititute has seemed a bit overwhelming at times. "After we'd signed all the contracts and everything, I just thought, This is all too good to be true," he recalls. "I asked them 'What's the catch?' But there wasn't any." Indeed, for the Institute, the rewards are the purely intangible ones that come from what Hammett calls "getting new ideas into circulation." Under the terms of its contract with Murray, the Institute will only take enough royalties from *Losing Ground* to pay itself back for the money it advanced to Murray; Murray himself gets to keep whatever is left over after that.

And Hammet's foundation backers have no doubt found Kristol's goals for influencing the discussion within the new class brilliantly fulfilled. They are beating liberal ideas with conservative ones. The comparison with Harrington's book is apt. Just as *The Other America* helped prepare the public consciousness for the Great Society, *Losing Ground* has become the manifesto of those who want Great Society programs dismantled once and for all—although Hammett himself concedes that this is a long-term proposition. "We wrote it to inform the debate in '88," he says, forgetting for a moment, perhaps, that Murray wrote the book alone.

As this slip of the tongue suggests, the quality of Murray's intellectual goods is not the only reason for his success. Barriers to entry in the marketplace of ideas are high, and Murray has had generous help overcoming them. If there's a liberal out there who wants his provocative and statistically sophisticated defense of social programs to be debated, he can always turn to the foundations and think tanks that Kristol complained about in 1977. But the Brookings Institution, the Ford Foundation, the prominent New York publishing houses, and the like are hardly as attuned to the way political ideas get into circulation as are organizations like the Manhattan Institute. The more traditional outfits just send out press releases and review copies and wait (pray, really) for good ideas to be recognized. They have not yet mastered the art of making sure that a busy writer for, say, *U.S. News* will hear about and read their products. The Manhattan Institute's canny innovation is to rely as little as possible on chance—and as much as possible on marketing. Of course, money helps, too.

CHUCK LANE

cent out of poverty. In effect, from 1968 to 1980, the slowing of the economy dropped people into poverty and the broadening of benefit programs lifted them out. The two trends roughly balanced each other, and the poverty rate remained about the same.

Murray claims the economic downturn had nothing to do with the failure of the poverty rate to drop in the 1970s. He asserts that economic growth, as measured by the Gross National Product, rose more in the 1970s than in the 1950s, when poverty did decline. This proves, he claims, that it wasn't the economy that kept poverty rates high in the 1970s. The trouble with this argument is that the GNP is not the relevant issue. Growth in the GNP does create jobs, but this growth was too slow in the 1970s to create *enough* jobs for the unusually large numbers of women and young people (from the baby-boom generation) who were entering the job market. As a result, unemployment rose. At the same time real wages, which had been rising steadily in the 1950s and 1960s, stopped growing. When unemployment rises and real wages fall, poverty increases—and low-income groups (especially black males) are affected the most. Far from being irrelevant, the economy was the principal reason poverty failed to drop in the 1970s. Only the benefit programs Murray attacks prevented poverty from rising further still.

The economic data also punch a large hole in what Murray calls "the most damning statistic" of all: the increase in "latent poverty" between 1968 and 1980. Latent

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poverty is Murray's term for the number of people who would be poor if they didn't get government benefits. The increase in latent poverty is of great importance, according to Murray. He says it proves that independence and initiative declined, sapped by the availability of government benefits. But the increase in latent poverty proves nothing of the sort. Because the latent poverty rate is based on income *other* than government benefits, changes in this rate largely reflect fluctuations in household earnings. As a result latent poverty rises when unemployment climbs and real wages fall. It was higher in 1980 than in 1968 simply because a weak recessionary economy produced fewer jobs and less income. This statistic tells us nothing about the supposed corrosive effects of social programs on individual initiative.

The fact is when social program benefits were raised in the period 1960-80, poverty declined, and when benefits were lowered, progress in reducing poverty halted. The elderly are a case in point. In the 1960s and 1970s, Social Security benefits expanded and the Supplemental Security Income program for the aged and disabled poor was created. As a result, the elderly poverty rate plummeted from 35 percent in 1959 to 25 percent in 1970 and to less than 16 percent in 1980.

Similarly, in the 1960s, when AFDC benefits rose in real terms, poverty among single-parent families dropped. After 1969, however, AFDC benefits fell sharply, as states failed to keep benefits even with inflation. This turnaround in AFDC benefits is critical. It means that the poverty rate for the non-elderly stopped declining at the same time that AFDC benefits started falling. The correlation between benefit levels and poverty trends stands Murray's thesis on its head. Rather than suggest, as Murray does, that increased welfare had an adverse effect on poverty, the data indicate that it was reductions in benefits (along with a faltering economy) that contributed to the unsatisfactory progress against poverty in recent years.

Indeed, no other group in American society experienced such a sharp decline in real income since 1970 as did AFDC mothers and their children. Yet *Losing Ground* ignores this development. Despite Murray's professed interest in determining why poverty stopped declining, the fundamental fact that benefits for AFDC families fell 20 percent during this period is *never mentioned* in his book. Murray tells his readers only that benefit increases "slowed" after 1970 and increased "little if at all" after the mid-1970s. No hint is ever provided that benefits actually declined.

MURRAY ALSO ignores important research that doesn't fit his argument. Murray contends, for example, that AFDC benefits are a prime cause of illegitimacy, especially among black teenagers. The leading research on this issue strongly refutes his argument. Murray makes no mention of it.

In 1978, Maurice MacDonald and Isabel Sawhill published an exhaustive review of the research literature. They found no evidence of any significant connection between welfare and out-of-wedlock births. In early 1984, Harvard researchers David Ellwood and Mary Jo Bane published a landmark study on illegitimacy and welfare. Welfare apparently has some influence on whether unmarried women who get pregnant continue to live at home. But Ellwood and Bane found that welfare has *no* impact on whether unmarried women—including teenagers—get pregnant or bear children in the first place.

Murray ignores some relevant statistics too. From 1972 to 1980, the number of children in black female-headed households rose nearly 20 percent, but the number of black children on AFDC *fell by five percent*. If AFDC is to blame for illegitimacy, why did the black AFDC population decline at the same time that black female-headed households were increasing rapidly? How can welfare be encouraging more single black women to have children if many of these same women do not collect welfare when the children are born?

Murray is free to disagree with Ellwood and Bane. But he ought to explain why he believes their extensive research is flawed. He also ought to offer evidence to support his own contention that welfare has increased black teenage birth rates. He does neither. Instead, he avoids the formidable challenge Ellwood and Bane pose to his thesis by failing to acknowledge their work.

ANOTHER KEY element of the Murray thesis is that between 1965 and 1980, when social programs grew, the proportion of black men in the labor force declined and the employment gap between young white men and young black men widened. Once again, according to Murray, the programs were the culprits. Murray produces little evidence of a causal connection. And here too, the research points largely in other directions.

Employment among black teenagers actually declined more in the 1950s, before the poverty programs began, than it did in the 1960s. Research by John Cogan (now associate director of President Reagan's Office of Management and Budget) shows that virtually *all* of the decline in black teenage employment from 1950 to 1970 was caused by the disappearance of low-paying jobs in the south, as southern agriculture was mechanized. In 1950, Cogan reports, nearly half of all employed black teenagers worked as farm laborers, and more than 90 percent of these black teenage farm workers lived in the south. From 1950 to 1970, most farm employment in the south disappeared. As a result the main source of employment for black teenagers vanished.

Cogan's conclusions specifically refute Murray's hypothesis. The statistical evidence, Cogan observed, is "inconsistent with the view that the growth in welfare participation among blacks is at the heart of the decline [in black teenage employment]." In the north, where welfare benefits were higher and welfare participation grew much faster than in the south, black youth employment did *not* drop, Cogan noted. By contrast, it was in the south—where welfare payments were lower and welfare rolls grew much more slowly—that black teenage employment fell.

To be sure, employment among black youth continued

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to fall after 1970, when the mechanization of agriculture was largely complete. But by the early 1970s AFDC benefits were falling and welfare rolls had passed their period of growth, so the decline in black employment in this period cannot be blamed on expanding welfare benefits.

There are numerous other factors that appear to have contributed to the decline in black employment in the 1970s and to the widening jobs gap between black and white youth. The 1970s were a period of unprecedented competition for jobs, as record numbers of white women and black and white youth entered the labor market. In these swollen labor markets, further enlarged by immigration, many young blacks from poor families (and often with poor educations) appear to have been pushed to the "back of the queue."

But the existence of public assistance programs is, at most, only a very small part of the unemployment story. The research in this area indicates that welfare has only a slight effect in reducing the degree to which AFDC mothers work outside the home. The effect on black men does not appear substantial either. The basic reason is that men who are not elderly or disabled are not eligible for much in welfare. Cash welfare benefits available to black unemployed youth range from meager to non-existent in nearly all jurisdictions.

EVEN IF poverty programs did not foster illegitimacy and idleness, did they produce positive results? Murray insists the answer is no. "Starting with the first evaluation reports in the mid-60s and continuing to the present day, the results of these programs have been disappointing to their advocates and evidence of failure to their critics," he proclaims. What is Murray's evidence? He discusses the disappointing results of community action programs, job training programs, and a failed Economic Development Administration project in Oakland, California. Even here, Murray overstates the case: evaluations of job training programs show mixed results. The more important point, though, is that most of these are early and relatively small "War on Poverty" efforts. Murray never addresses the research showing success in other, larger programs, many of which he proposes to eliminate.

In the decade before 1965, the infant mortality rate changed little. From 1965 to 1980, when Medicaid and other health programs were instituted, infant mortality was cut in half. There were especially large declines among blacks. Similarly, the mortality rate for men over 65 rose a bit in the decade before Medicare. But in the decade from 1968 to 1978 this trend was reversed. As Paul Starr, author of *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*, reported recently, life expectancy for Americans began to improve significantly around 1968. By 1980, average life expectancy at birth had grown four years, while mortality rates, adjusted for age, had fallen 20 percent. These are striking achievements, and Medicare and Medicaid were major factors. By virtually every measure prenatal and geriatric care for the poor improved markedly when these programs were introduced.

"Murray suggests that a variety of indicators show deterioration in the condition of the poor in America," Starr writes in a recent paper, "but curiously, although he recommends the complete termination of Medicaid, he never refers to any evidence about the health of blacks and the poor since the story there is exactly the reverse of the one he wants to tell."

The story is the reverse of what Murray wants to tell in other areas as well. Department of Agriculture surveys have found that the gap in nutrition between low-income Americans and the rest of society narrowed significantly from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, the period when food stamps and other food assistance programs were developed and expanded. Other research has found that food stamp recipients eat better diets than similar low-income families not on food stamps, that school lunches improve the nutrition of children, and that the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children results in a marked reduction in low-weight births, which is a cause of poor health among children.

Similarly, careful evaluations have shown that the compensatory education program for disadvantaged children improves the reading and math scores of low-income elementary school children (and narrows the gap in test scores between young black and white children); that the Head Start program correlates with increased employment and reduced welfare, crime, and teenage pregnancy; and that the community health centers program improves the health of low-income communities, producing less hospitalization and reduced Medicaid costs.

Murray would abolish most of these programs. Yet any discussion of the abundant research literature about them is absent from his book.

It is true that while these programs reduced poverty and caused sharp improvements in such areas as health and nutrition, the programs did not create jobs or increase earnings for large numbers of the poor. That, however, would be an extremely difficult task to achieve in an economy that was not generating enough jobs to prevent unemployment from rising and real wages from stagnating. New approaches to spurring economic activity in poor communities—and to combatting teenage pregnancy as well—are needed and should be explored. But abolishing everything from food stamps to Medicaid will serve no purpose other than to make distress and hardship more acute than they already are.

CONGRESS WILL soon engage in bitter battles over where to cut the federal budget, and *Losing Ground* is already being used as ammunition by those who would direct more reductions at programs for the poor. They cite the book as a dispassionate source of objective data showing that the social programs have failed. Yet the book can be considered neither dispassionate nor objective. Its distortions and omissions are too serious. *Losing Ground* is more of a polemical tract than an attempt to examine the complexities and discern the truth about some of the most significant social problems of our times. □

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America's greatest city.

CHICAGO, PRIDE OF THE RUSTBELT

BY THOMAS GEOGHEGAN

ON A LOCAL talk-show recently, a New York actress, Elizabeth Ashley, said of Chicago: "*This* is a real town." Chicago gets many friendly pats on the head like this. A friend of mine, a Chicagoan transplanted from the East like me, growls: "Don't you hate it when they come out here and say, 'Oh, what a little *secret* this city is'?"

Chicago wasn't always a lost city. Starting around 1893 with the Columbian Exposition and lasting through Al Capone, it was the city that most captured America's imagination. In those years, Chicago was an enchanted place, with its history of political riots, gangland wars, and overnight business empires, a history as surrealistic as a Latin American novel. Then, mysteriously, it went out of style. And that raises a crucial, maddening question: Is this place really any different from St. Louis, Detroit, or Indianapolis?

The Elizabeth Ashley problem is that in parts of Chicago, you can pretend you are in New York. Chicago is still the only city in America where such pretending can go on. It has an elegant, Mies van der Rohe skyline. Michigan Avenue is a kind of surrogate Madison Avenue. The Sears Tower, which looks like the black obelisk that descended on the ape-lings in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, is still the world's tallest building. Caller on Chicago radio: Is the Sears Tower the tallest in Chicago? Announcer: The Sears Tower is the tallest building in the world. Caller: Yeah, but is it the tallest in Chicago?

Maybe you are safer with Chicago's surrogate Manhattan. When it gets too expensive, you can always stop pretending, walk a few blocks west, and be back in cheap, ugly Brechtian Chicago. And Chicago's "Manhattan" is much cleaner than the real one. You can hail a cab for the Pump Room, as Cary Grant and Irene Dunne once did, without having to step over upended garbage cans. Still, it is a runty little Manhattan. If you compare the Chicago skyline with New York's, you must think: "O.K., as far as it goes, but is that all?" Lake Shore Drive has a nice wall of high rises, but only on one side of the street. Past the high rises, it drops sheer off to Flatbush, the land of little White Hen Pantry Stores.

That is where the real Chicago begins, flat, cold, and neon. It is like a film noir movie set of the late 1940s. The people are as earthbound as characters in an R. Crumb cartoon. The real Chicago: where a man can live his life as it was meant to be lived in a crumpled London Fog raincoat, where he can rattle in an El over Depression-era housing, where he can wax sentimental about urban ugliness.

Andy Warhol says that in our culture, everyone will be famous for 15 minutes. But the writ of Warhol does not run as far as Chicago. It is thin soil for the culture of narcissism out here. That is how Chicago has gotten rid of Hugh Hefner, Phil Donahue, Jesse Jackson (almost), and others.

Anyway, geography is destiny. Chicago gets its eerie Oz-like character from its location. It sits inexplicably in the middle of a prairie next to a mysterious inland sea. Both the city and the lake seem connected to some special Midwest creation-myth, or whatever it was that sent the glaciers down to carve out the prairies and the Great Lakes. Then rose up Chicago, the nation's once (and future?) middle-kingdom city, now receding as slowly as a glacier from its former preeminence but not yet like every other rustbelt town.

What makes Chicago provincial?

First, Chicago is a family town. Even the chic Lakefronter lives not far from Mom and Dad, who may be just over the line in River Forest or Evergreen Park. Unlike New York or Los Angeles, Chicago does not draw from all over. Doomed by its weather, it must reproduce itself from itself, counting on each moping generation to hang out around home. Of course, there are a few witless kids from the Dakotas or Milwaukee, running halfway from home. Even the artists and actors, if you ask them about it, never roamed farther than the U. of I. campus at Champaign-Urbana.

Second, Chicago is a blue-collar immigrant town. Even the sublime in Chicago has a 1935-proletarian taint: its daylight baseball, its opera, its Joycean bar-talk, its Pan-Slavism. Chicago is a holy land of Pan-Slavism, the world's second-largest Polish-speaking city. A friend of mine explains: "New York has the Jews, Italians, and Irish, so New York is manic, brassy, and exciting. Chicago has the Poles, Croats, and Slovaks, so Chicago is sullen, defeated, and oppressed."

Some Lakefronters would gladly trade the Poles for the Italians, because they prefer pasta to dumplings. But only East Europeans appreciate Chicago's current fate. To paraphrase Milan Kundera, they have seen their nations van-

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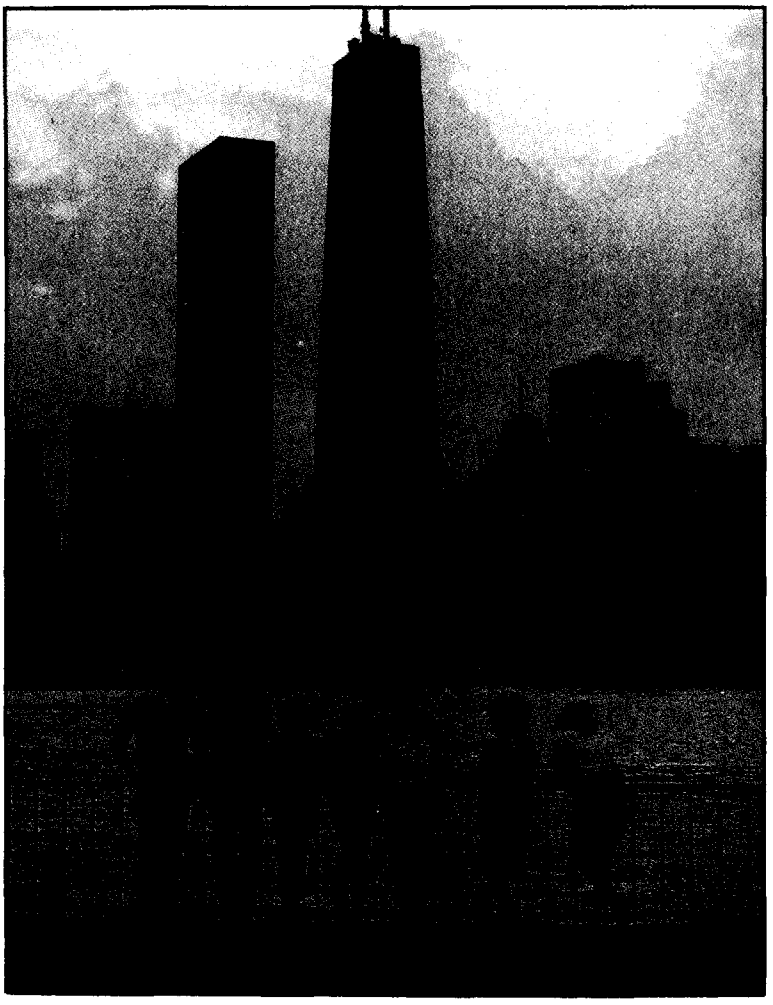
ish from the air. They can readily understand how the Chicago of 1890-1930 has gone into the historical dustbin.

And of course, they helped to shape that fate. There is something 19th century about a town where the churches and saloons monopolize the epiphanies. The Catholic churches represent old Europe, trying to medievalize the prairie. I like the old German churches on the North Side. St. Michael's, for example, has a flamboyantly rococo interior, more like a Hindu shrine than a Bavarian church. The pastor told me that he hates to preach in such a church. "You can't hold their attention, they're looking all over the church." Here, European art and European religion battled for America's soul in immigrant churches where the immigrants are now Hispanics and Asians. It is a kind of permanent Polish and German occupation in the middle of the city.

You see another aspect of old Europe in Chicago's history of working-class radicalism: Debs, the Haymarket anarchists, the Wobblies, and many tough German unionists buried in Berwyn. It was Chicago, not Europe, that introduced the celebration of "May Day," the great holiday of European and Soviet socialism. The relationship between this labor movement and the immigrant church was nothing like that between Solidarity and the church in Poland. But their coexistence was no accident, either.



CHICAGO'S MIES VAN DER ROHE SKYLINE. PHOTO BY ATOZ IMAGES.

Chicago even has something that resembles European pub life. It may have the last few neighborhoods in America where it can be fashionable for men, like their steelworker fathers and grandfathers, actually to try to gain weight, to bring a decent belly up to the bar. Even if some steelworkers have taken up jogging (especially young ones who have left the mills and become male nurses and data processors), others still define their masculinity by their girth. This old folkway shaped the bone structure of the town—and the suburbs. At the Ritz-Carlton bar, a friend from New York was aghast as she looked around the room: "Why is everyone in the Midwest so fleshy?"

Chicago has journalists' bars, ethnic bars, neighborhood bars, even midget bars, hundreds, maybe thousands of bars, one on every neighborhood block. I was drinking one afternoon in O'Rourke's, a bar on the Near North Side. It was dark and empty, which suited my mood. A fat, stubble-bearded, middle-aged man waddled in, took the stool next to mine, and ordered a beer. He was completely unremarkable, except that he was dressed, head to toe, in a white-lace wedding gown. After a silence, I said, "Been to a wedding?" He brushed back his veil, rustled his petticoats and said, "Uh . . . yeah." He silently finished his drink and left. The bartender said, "You know, even the transvestites in this town have five o'clock shadows."

I didn't really understand the East Coast until I lived in Chicago. One day last spring, walking in New York, I realized that this is the last great American city not ruined by Yuppies. Manhattan, Boston, Washington, San Francisco—the people who go to David's Cookies have these towns by the throat. Even in Chicago, as Saul Bellow said, a new "synthetic" city is moving north from the Loop. But so far, old Chicago, with its pug-ugly ethnicity, stands athwart the approach of the cappuccino machines.

The neighborhoods are almost too raw to fully gentrify. As an old manufacturing town, Chicago has too much blasted industrial heath, too many abandoned warehouses with broken windows. Even cute, gingerbread neighborhoods look stark and uninviting, as if they were about to revert to their native state. "Maybe they need lampposts like you see in Georgetown or Back Bay," a friend of mine says. I don't think so. Chicago's homeliness is its defense against the pod-peopling gentrification that is sucking the lifeblood from other 19-century American cities.

Maybe the Asian and Hispanic immigrants who come here, passing up Los Angeles and its weather, have a sense of that. Maybe they sense that no one culture, not even upper-middle-class culture, predominates. In Chicago, the "hidden injuries of class," as social historians Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb put it, are both less hidden

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and less severe. Ethnic folk culture and blue-collar culture have their own dignity here.

In Chicago you cannot assume the same isolation of working people from the issues that dominate the lives of the city's men of high culture. To an astonishing extent, Chicago fiction and drama is about working-class men and women: Nelson Algren, Theodore Dreiser, James Farrell, Richard Wright, Saul Bellow (sometimes), David Mamet, Meyer Levin. Before Marshall Field V sold the tabloid *Sun-Times* to Rupert Murdoch, it was the city's best newspaper, and one of the best papers in the country. "It's the only example," a reporter told me, "of a highbrow proletarian newspaper." Mike Royko, who was at his most awesome at the *Sun-Times*, wrote about wedding brawls, dog-shootings, and aldermen's cousins. *Sun-Times* readers turned straight to Royko, as readers of *Figaro* might turn to the day's essay on Sartre or Balzac.

IF YOU HAVE to be an American, you might as well live in Chicago. Do it right. Embrace your fate. Somewhere in the history of this city is the secret to the American character. Every polarity of the American character finds expression here. In his essay "Reflections on the American Identity" Erik Erikson defined that identity in a way that especially held true for Chicago. Erikson began by noting that in America, the boy's male ideal is often not his father but his grandfather. Today, the image of the "powerful and powerfully driven grandfather" haunts Chicago history: the gangland bosses, the industry magnates, the labor radicals, the hustlers who rebuilt the city after the Great Fire of 1871 burned it down.

The sons and grandsons of these men act like "free-born sons"—that is, they hail the grandfathers who built the city, but disclaim responsibility for making it run today. Instead, they leave it to the "machines," both political and industrial. Nowhere is that kind of social dysfunctioning greater than in Chicago, the "city that works." Here, the political system is quite literally known as "the Machine." Erikson discusses the legend of John Henry, who died trying to show that he was equal to the machine. Chicago is a city of John Henry prototypes. Chicago's sons ran the machines, formed their character to be as tough as the machines, and died at the machines, free-born son following free-born father, in Chicago's mills and factories.

Erikson says that in America " 'bosses' and 'machines' are . . . a danger to the American identity, because Americans measure everything by what works." He asks: "But are they, as men, not strangely disinterested in the running of the nation? Are these free-born sons not apt to be remarkably naive, overly optimistic, and morbidly self-restrained in their dealing with the men who run them? . . . they can be boisterous when on a spree; but on the whole, they respectfully shy away from all bigness, whether it is dollars or loud words." One polarity of Chicago is the city of fast-buck hustlers and working-class heroes—Capone, Dillinger, Studs Lonigan, Bigger Thomas. The other is the city of free-born sons, who belly up to the bar and meekly submit to the machines. Now the machines are being scrapped. The stockyards have gone, the railroads have collapsed, and U.S. Steel has gone into the oil business. The John Henry prototypes have to settle down to a low-wage life in McDonaldland serfdom.

THERE WAS ALWAYS a randomness about Chicago's economic success. Arbitrarily, the railroads made it great, and what the railroads did for Chicago, they could have done almost as well for Ames, Iowa. Then, arbitrarily, the greatness receded, at least on the South Side. Chicago had specialized in agriculture and industry, while New York specialized in trade and commerce. Then Chicago got "de-industrialized," and New York got more trade and commerce. The Loop attracted its share of corporate headquarters, and became the city's glorious crowned head, while the rest of the body politic had a sucking chest wound. O'Hare Airport is a kind of consolation prize.

On the South Side is the detritus of de-industrialization: truck drivers whose terminals have closed, steelworkers living on government cheese, old men sipping Cokes in the bars at noon, young men drifting back from Houston to enroll in community colleges, disciples of Saul Alinsky picketing chemical dumps. On the South Side was the city's heart and muscle before World War II. If the North Side is now the city's post-industrial liberal ego, the South Side is still its collective unconscious. It is a quiet, melancholy place, peopled with the ghosts of ore-boat sailors, saints and reformers like Mother Cabrini and Jane Addams, and even cows, millions of cows, whose voiceless mooing can still be heard at the abandoned stockyard gates in Back of the Yards.

Now the wrecking crews are at work on the South Side mills and factories, like U.S. Steel South Works and Wisconsin Steel. The families in the surrounding neighborhoods used to have a tenuous half-grip on middle-class life. Today the world economy, in the form of a steel glut, has caught up with them. Businessmen and academics tut-tut about their former union-scale wages. The resentful non-union majority says: "Serves you right for forgetting your place. You wanted to buy that second car, when you should have been watching those Third World workers."

In my legal practice, I represent many such displaced workers. Our firm has brought suits against some employers that have tried to disavow their pension and severance-pay obligations. These suits seek to collect the benefits that the collective-bargaining regime, a kind of private welfare state, was designed to provide. One of them is against International Harvester. When it planned to shut down its Wisconsin Steel plant, it tried to shift ownership to an independent corporate shell, and disclaim its liabilities to the workers.

Every month or two, I drive down to the Roma Restaurant on the South Side to give the Wisconsin Steel employees a status report. Sometimes 300 or more people will have jammed into the stuffy, windowless room above the

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restaurant. Many come, I suppose, for the food that a workers' committee hands out at the end of the meeting. It is always deathly quiet when I step up to the microphone. They are waiting for "good news," that is, money, in any amount. There are then questions from the floor, usually personal questions about pension credits or survivor's benefits. On my last visit, the lights and electricity went out halfway through the question period, but no one moved. They stayed in the pitch dark, in silence, passively listening.

Many in the audience seem dazed, sleepwalking. Some, in their fifties and sixties, have 20 or more years of service in the mill. Their unemployment benefits ran out two years ago. They are too old to retrain or move to Houston. Yet there are some working-class heroes in this group as well. Certainly the last thing that Harvester expected when it closed the mill was that rank-and-file workers would organize a suit on their own. The group was led by a 60-year-old black carpenter who had never held union office.

Obviously I like the bleak parts of the city, what you may call "post-Chicago Chicago." Sometimes all of Chicago seems like post-Chicago Chicago. Several years ago, a book entitled *Lost Chicago* had photographs of great old 19th-century buildings that were torn down to make room for parking lots. The book started a trend: there is a *Lost New York*, a *Lost New Orleans*, and for all I know, a *Lost San Diego*. But Chicago, more than New York, senselessly tore down its former greatness.

To my Lakefront neighbors, the South Side is another planet. Even natives know little about it. It has too many high-calorie restaurants, and the railroad tracks that are sunk in the streets do not fit their cars' wheel base. But it is the scene of my professional legal work. Here I am, trying to keep the old smokestack industries going, or squeezing money from them when they've gone.

A friend of mine says, "You've become a liberal reactionary." I don't mind the term, although I believe in the neoliberal gospel of high-tech, economic growth, and small entrepreneurship. In South Chicago, the original industrial revolution is still going on, except in reverse. If it is "reactionary" to help those being chewed up in the process, then so be it, but it is also a decent, liberal, humane instinct to try.

BACK IN 1968 Norman Mailer wrote, in *Miami and the Siege of Chicago*, that Chicago was "the great American city." New York, he decided, was really more of a world city than an American one. Were I to extend that thought, I would stress Chicago's two strongest advantages over New York: (1) you can drive your car (indeed, even park it on the streets); and (2) you can see the sky.

I do not understand how Manhattanites live without cars. Maybe this was the sense in which Mailer meant that Chicago was a great *American* city and New York was not. When I thought about moving to Chicago, a friend said, "It's as good as New York, and you can drive your car." Or maybe he said, "It's not as good as New York, but you can drive your car." Either way, it comes out the same.

You can read me *The New Yorker* listings, you can recite the treasures of the Met, the Opera, Lincoln Center, and Broadway, and you can rhapsodize about Upper East Side street life, but the bottom line is: no car. No car means no car radio, no Bruce Springsteen music, no fantasies of power and control, no American way of life. When I was a teenager, I did not walk to school, or take the bus, I *drove* to school. How can I live an adult male life on foot, getting mugged and spit upon?

Nor will you find "sky" in a *New Yorker* or *Village Voice* listing. Chicago, however, has a huge Carl Sandburg prairie sky, a gray rainshed of sky in winter, and an Aegean-blue sky in summer. Even on the congested Lakefront, there is the kind of sky they put over a NASA tracking station. You do not see anything in Chicago like the Manhattan St. Vitus dance of people gasping for air a half-block from Central Park. There is no roof-climbing, primal-screaming, or darkness at noon—nothing worse than the claustrophobia of six-month winters.

IN A SENSE, Chicago's advantages are only negatives of New York that Chicago does not have. But Chicago does have Lake Michigan, its one incomparable asset. The most important thing about Lake Michigan is that you cannot see across it. Like Hindus sitting on the banks of the Ganges, most Chicagoans spend endless hours staring at it, in a benumbed, metropolitan meditation that goes on decade after decade. No city makes better use of its shoreline, and I think there is some quasi-religious impulse behind that fine civic deed, the tribute of a godless city to some sea-god in the lake.

The lake embodies some maternal principle, softening Chicago's image as a "man's town." In the winter, it turns gray and hibernates, without a surface ripple. But in the spring and summer, it becomes a living and breathing thing. Young professionals live on its shores, in a world of white sails and white wine, linked from the loop northward by a cinder path of joggers. Here is the part of Chicago that single career women cling to like Omaha Beach.

This is only a sketch for Mailer's argument. But it does not address a very Maileresque concern: If this is the greatest American city, where are the beautiful women? Sure, you cannot expect Natassia Kinski in an Edward Hopper painting. Sure, the exposed female limb in this town risks occasional frostbite and gangrene. Sure, today Dreiser's Sister Carrie would not go to Chicago, but to Santa Barbara. But it is as if some plague had swept them clean from the streets and stores of Michigan Avenue and Lincoln Park. Chicago women are certainly not homely. Neither is your sister or my cousin. I am speaking here of heart-stopping, Condé Nast beauty. On that count, even the quiche lorraine district is a desert.

Hugh Hefner long ago realized that he could not truly be Hugh Hefner here. Recently Hefner, an amateur eugenicist who would have been good company for Joseph Goebbels, offered his theory as to why there are no beauti-

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ful women in places like Chicago. You see, beautiful women gravitate to Hollywood, and well, the Playboy Mansion, for their Warholian quarter-hour. True, most do not become stars. But the gene pool gets more and more beautiful. A few of the female children go to New York for modeling jobs. Tough luck, Rustbowl.

AT ONE TIME, Chicago had Dreiser, Sandburg, Sherwood Anderson, Vachel Lindsay, Edgar Lee Masters, Ernest Hemingway. Alfred Kazin wrote that Chicago once had a claim equal to New York's as the nation's literary and intellectual capital. Then the Red Scare, circa World War I, sent many of them East. The death knell came in the 1930s, when the great migration of European intellectuals reached America. You would have expected Thomas Mann and that serious crowd to end up at the University of Chicago. But no, once past New York it was strictly Hollywood. Mann wrote *Dr. Faustus*, his great summation of Germany's fate, somewhere in L.A., probably by a swimming pool.

Chicago does have more cultural and intellectual talent than any other city outside New York. Yet like every provincial capital, it is always hemorrhaging. For example, when *Esquire* recently named 200 outstanding young Americans, about eight of them were from Chicago. But if you looked closely at their credentials, most of them already had one foot in New York. Whenever Chicago recognizes its own, you know they are about to leave town. The ones at the University of Chicago stay, but they surface for public view only in Norway to get some Nobel Prizes.

David Mamet is a typical example of a "Chicago writer," someone long departed but treated in the media as if he still lived here. Mamet made the big move to New York, then made the *really* big move: Vermont. In theater especially, New York continually rips off, or rips apart, good local companies like Steppenwolf, Goodman, and Second City, and even remounts local Chicago classics as if they had originated in New York (like recent productions of *True West* and *Balm in Gilead*).

Chicago theater has been so exciting of late that it almost calls our provincialism into question. Theater "happened" in Chicago largely because of a new post-30, post-graduate generation audience. Still, New York has the same social class, but there has been no comparable "renaissance" of New York theater at its coming-of-age. A crass explanation is that in Chicago very good theater is very cheap, often only $2.50 more than a first-run movie. An actress I know here says: "No wonder Chicago actors go to New York. Here, you can get work but not enough money to eat. There, you can get money, but it's hard to find work."

Anyway, what really sells in Chicago is not serious drama but cabaret comedy, like Second City, where you can tank up on booze through the performance. For cathartic experience, the rest of the polis assembles in Comiskey Park and Wrigley Field.

Next to the Cubs, Chicago is most loved for its corruption. It is so kitsch; cops protecting whorehouses, judges going to jail, city employees working their precincts and marching in torchlight parades. In Chicago, corruption is no narrow province; it is ecumenical, in every sense of the word. Before he died, a federal grand jury seemed about to indict His Eminence Cardinal Cody. A red hat: Can New York, or even Singapore, top that? Political scientists chuckle, "Chicago ain't ready for reform." Mayor Harold Washington is regarded as a bit of a bore for trying to end it. The press is almost smitten with the "two Eddies," Ed Vrdolyak and Ed Burke, leaders of the Machine diehards in City Council, who want to keep a Chicago of political fiefs encircling the Yuppie bubbleheads on the Lakefront.

Some people think that Royko and others have made the Chicago alderman into a cartoon figure. The same type of character, they say, must be in politics everywhere. But then an alderman will be exposed at something that would make even a Renaissance prince blush. The U.S. Attorney's Office in Chicago is usually monitoring a half-dozen of them. Before every election, as a warning, the office announces indictments of precinct captains from the last election. We are proud that the mean streets of Chicago are meaner than New York's.

The U.S. attorney is currently prosecuting state court judges (who are slated by the Machine) for fixing tickets and taking bribes. Nothing has really changed from Nelson Algren's day, when he wrote in *Chicago: City on the Make*, "I too wish to defend my city from people who keep saying it is crooked. In what other city can you be so sure a judge will keep his word for five hundred dollars?" After the indictments came, the conventional wisdom was that Chicago voters would throw out all the sitting judges running for retention. Instead, the voters reelected every one of them. The real public outrage was of a different kind. "Hell," one man complained to my brother, "now the average guy won't be able to get a ticket fixed."

WHILE THE STATE judges are going to jail, the federal judges have gradually put most of the city in receivership. The federal courts have taken over a host of municipal functions. To remedy the Daly-era racism, they have come to regulate the park district, the housing authority, the police department, and other agencies. The political system is so deadlocked that everything in Chicago sooner or later comes to federal court.

But since the election of Harold Washington, the kitsch has gone out of Chicago politics. Washington won the Democratic mayoral primary two years ago when nutty Jane Byrne and tongue-tied Richie Daley split the white vote. Then Washington barely beat an obscure Republican crackpot, Bernard Epton, in the bitter, almost insane, general election.

In televised debates held during the primary, Washington had convinced everyone, white and black, that he was a far more impressive candidate than either Byrne or Daley. Of course that in itself won him very few white votes, even white liberal votes. But it had an astounding, revolutionizing effect on Chicago blacks. They had long been docile Machine voters. Watching the TV debates they

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were thunderstruck with the realization that their guy—the black man—was the blue-ribbon candidate.

The racism of the general election—Epton's campaign slogan was "Epton before it's too late"—was a nasty shock to the black middle class. These were lawyers, teachers, businessmen. Some lived in integrated neighborhoods like Hyde Park, mixed with whites and acted like them. Many now say they had expected the white racism of 1983, but I think that in some ways they had not. By 1983 they had begun to feel, I think, that that their middle-class success might outweigh their blackness in the eyes of whites, especially liberals. It must have been an unpleasant surprise to see so many white liberals flock to Daley's son Richie. Now this Daley may nor may not be to the left of his father, but he is clearly not of Washington's caliber, and he was still the heir in that election to an openly racist political tradition.

I worked for Washington in the primary and general election, not entirely on principle. I met him once, he shook my hand, and made a point of getting my name right. (Chicago is a small town, and you can line up behind a guy simply because he shook your hand.) But during the campaign, middle-class blacks were always shocked to meet a white working for Washington. I think they felt betrayed and expected betrayal. I took a perverse satisfaction in wearing my Washington button in the Loop, even after the election, until a friend advised me to take it off: "People will think you've been offered a job."

That's why it annoys me to hear white liberals say that Washington is, well, you know, kind of a racist himself. They feel that if Washington were really such a great liberal reformer, he would turn the city over to them to run. White liberals feel somewhat irrelevant. All they can do is sit on the sidelines and sniff that Washington and Vrdolyak are on the same level, and that both succeed only by making appeals to their racial constituencies, a notion that Vrdolyak encourages.

THIS MORAL superiority is, to say the least, misplaced, especially from people who spent 1983 in their cellars and kept silent even through the horrors of the Epton campaign. In fact, the Washington administration is not racist at all. To the contrary, it has been extraordinarily fair to the white ethnic neighborhoods on the Southwest and Northwest sides, although it has received little credit for it.

Washington has had his troubles but he is also the first mayor to try to govern without kickbacks, payoffs, and patronage. He cannot even count on the black aldermen in the City Council because they came up through the Machine and would desert him in a minute for their former Vrdolyak cronies if they did not fear retaliation in the black wards. Washington's problem, ironically, is that he is exactly like white liberals, an older black politician, older than Jesse Jackson or Martin Luther King Jr., with an old-time clean government agenda and some scores to settle with the ghost of the Machine.

A new generation of Machine pols, now reaching their mid-forties, had expected to keep feeding at the trough when Daley died in 1975. In a great irony of history, the black population, almost unwittingly, got in their way. Usually the urban poor, from Boss Tweed to the present, have had no special enthusiasm for honesty in government. It has always seemed like a sterile, abstract, middle-class cause. However, when their political moment came, Chicago blacks elected not a Machine hack or spoilsman but a political reformer. Unable to make a deal with the new mayor, the "two Eddies" played on white racism. On the West Side, white mobs have trashed or burned down the homes of a few Chicago blacks. The Vrdolyak crowd is playing a racist game without truly believing in hardcore racism. They just want to keep their piece of the action.

IN THE END, it is not New York but California that broke the city's nerve, just as it has broken the nerve of every other rustbelt town. There is an agony, with the raw wind scraping at the door, in watching Tom Selleck and other TV stars night after night enjoying Southern California weather. It takes a psychic toll to be baited like that all winter long. Autumn is torture here, every nice day making people more and more anxious and unhappy. It is a relief when winter blows in, and we can settle down into a comfortable Chekhovian despair.

Last January, I kidded a Russian émigré, one of the many who live here, that she must be used to cold winters in Moscow. She turned to me, bitterly: "Yes, you laugh, but this is much colder than Moscow. Is colder that Leningrad!" I have never wished good weather for Chicago. First, it is unlikely, with our terrible winters, that the Russians will ever attack us. Second, without its winter, Chicago, like Russia, would not have its iron Slavic soul. The world's coldest big city: that at least keeps us from mediocrity.

But Chicago needs a new myth for itself. The nation has always yearned for some counterpoint to New York, one kind of urban myth to set against another, something antithetical but equal to effete, East Coast Manhattan. From 1890 to 1930, that counter-idea was Chicago. Later, with a sinister plasticity, it became California, or L.A., or more accurately, Hollywood. The idea of the Midwest—the "good" Grant Wood Midwest and the "bad" Ohio-isolationist Midwest—crept out of our culture. Chicago became, to Elizabeth Ashley and her friends, "a little secret." To the jet travelers known as "bi-coastals," the Midwesterners became "the fly-over people."

To 19th-century photographers, Chicago was a "silver city," a vision of the urban future as a utopia. Oh Chicago, some utopia, some "silver city" you are now. What idea of yourself do you have to pose against New York or L.A., so they stop sending their camera crews out here only for the big snowstorms? Chicago's rising star is now a worn-out supernova, which has exploded all over suburbia. Maybe Chicago is America's last chance to redeem the silver city, and bring it to the here and now, as it cannot be redeemed in New York, which devours itself in money and garbage, and in California, which never had the vision at all. Is that, Elizabeth Ashley, Chicago's ultimate "little secret"? □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Domestic Service

My, but Liv Ullmann has been busy with household chores lately. First: in an Australian version of *The Wild Duck*, set in 1913, she plays Gina Ekdal (here called Gina Ackland) and tries to keep her family together, despite her husband's angers and her daughter's tears,

The Wild Duck
(RKR Entertainment Group)

The Bay Boy
(Orion)

by serving up herring and potatoes, setting and clearing tables, sewing and comforting and slaving away. Ullmann succeeds in the role—at least to the degree that Gina's life is all that is substantial in the film.

The director and co-author of the adaptation was Henri Safran, who has made every important mistake. Ibsen's play is extraordinarily difficult to perform; or to put it properly, like every Isben play, it has its particular difficulties in performance. As many have noted, *The Wild Duck* has no true central character, no protagonist. The main story strand has to do with the efforts of Gregers Werle (here called Gregory Wardle) to bring the light of candor into the illusion-wrapped life of Hjalmar Ekdal (here called Harold Ackland). But Werle is not a vicar for us, he is a cautionary character, through whom, as Eric Bentley says, Ibsen sees "the dangers of losing integrity by obsession with integrity." And Ekdal is not a hero but a victim of that obsession. Yet Ekdal is played here by Jeremy Irons, a star who is used because he is a star, while Werle is played by a much dimmer actor. This throws the daring doubleness of the drama out of whack. We spend a great deal of time with Ekdal as if he were the hero, Prometheus tied to his rock, instead of seeing him as a martyr to Werle's well-meaning disruptions.

The most delicate element in the play's theater life is its symbolism: the wounded wild duck that has been nursed back to health in the Ekdal attic, where it lives amidst the rabbits and pigeons and other creatures that Ekdal's old father goes up there to "hunt." For more than practical theater reasons, Ibsen was careful to keep these creatures out of view, to prevent their blunt reality from maiming their symbolic use. Safran, however, takes us up into the attic, shows us the creatures and the "hunting," and wipes out any chance of poetic suggestion. Ibsen is also careful not to let us see the Ekdal daughter, Hedvig (here called Henrietta), in her moment of crisis. Near the end of the play, under various pressures, she goes up to the attic to shoot her beloved wild duck as a sacrifice, then decides to sacrifice herself instead. Ibsen wanted us to infer all this, to be shaken by what is not seen. But of course Safran knew better.

Irons fulminates as Ekdal, but we feel that he is struggling to alter the character, not play it, struggling to convert it into the star role he has been hired to fill. The daughter, a child whom I won't name, is so false that I suspect she is a photographer's model, accustomed to obeying orders about looking winsome. In 1976 a German director, Hans W. Geissendorfer, filmed *The Wild Duck*, with the late, dear Jean Seberg as Gina. It was leaden; but the new one, except for Ullmann, is even worse.

After seeing *The Wild Duck*, Rilke wrote (in a letter cited by Bentley): "There was something very great, deep, essential. Doomsday and judgment. Something ultimate." Not on film. Not yet.

And once again Ullmann is a drudging, loyal housewife-mother in *The Bay Boy*. This is a Canadian film, shot mostly in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia. Written and directed by Daniel Petrie, a film and TV veteran, it deals chiefly with Ullmann's son, a 16-year-old boy. The voice-over at the beginning and end uses the pronoun "I." Petrie is often called American, but he was born in Glace Bay, in 1920; he didn't come to the United States until 1945. The film is set in 1937. Allowing for such changes as the medium might require, we are thus invited to assume that, like Robert Benton's recent *Places in the Heart*, *The Bay Boy* is autobiographical.

It's a decent, respectable piece of work. That sounds like damning with faint praise; I don't mean to damn it at all, I just can't shout about it. It has only one real drawback, but that one is considerable: essentially, we've seen it all before. This restatement, though done feelingly, opens little to us other than its novelty of setting. It's one more tale of adolescent rites of passage, including sexual initiation and first encounters with real corruption, with the hidden blackness in seemingly good people. The boy is the son of hardworking, poor, devoutly Catholic parents. We see again the reassurances and restraints of strict Catholic education, the comforts and discomforts of a tight family, the small-town pleasures and frustrations. The only episode that really rings hollow is one in which a visiting young priest makes tentative homosexual advances to the boy—not because it's incredible but because, once the epi-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Lost in America. Mild but intelligent comedy about a Yuppie couple who leave L.A. to find the "real" U.S. and end up in N.Y. Albert Brooks co-wrote, directed, stars—and does the last best. (Reviewed 3/18/85)

1984. John Hurt as Winston Smith and Richard Burton as O'Brien splendidly fulfill the core of Orwell's book—which is all we get. Direction and design are exceptional. (2/4/85)

Tchao Pantin. Something like Simenon. A young Parisian drug pusher and middle-aged filling-station man become friends in nighttime Paris. Better atmosphere than story. (3/11/85)

Witness. Kelly McGillis and the Amish countryside are so lovely that they lift the well-rubbed murder plot to some freshness. (2/18/85)

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sode starts, we can only watch it wind on to its quite predictable conclusion.

Petrie has directed with affection yet restraint. Claude Agostini's cinematography is perhaps a bit too misty and "reminiscent," but it evokes the place. The music by Claude Bolling is in the right, lyrical, Georges Delerue vein, mostly a flute singing above strings. The cast is first-rate. Even in the superfluous episode, the priest is excellently played by Mathiew Carrière, who was the German officer in *Ways in the Night*. Peter Donat, familiar in the theater, is sturdy yet gentle as the beset father. Ullmann is simple and authentic as the mother, much better than she is in *The Wild Duck*, but then her role here was written for the screen, not cramped for it. Her compassion, her courage, her sadness are not displayed to make us admire Ullmann, they are subscribed to this woman.

The best surprise, a very pleasant one, is the performance of the son, the Bay boy, by Kiefer Sutherland. He is Donald Sutherland's son, and when you see him, you not only know this at once, you are amazed at all the resemblances. Physically, vocally, even in movement, he is uncannily like his father. The effect is almost like wizardry, as if the father had managed to revert to adolescence in order to play this part. Yet the son is not daunted by all this; he is himself, no carbon copy. He is fresh and responsive and, without straining in the least, quickly becomes endearing. Good adolescent actors are not uncommon. (I wonder what happens to most of them.) Kiefer Sutherland stands with the best of the recent crop, yet apart from them. His resemblance to his father makes him an individual at the same time that, paradoxically, it makes him something of an heir.

As for Ullmann, she has now cooked and drudged on enough continents. It's time to get her out of the kitchen.

THE STATE OF THE UNIONS

The Share Economy: Conquering Stagflation by Martin L. Weitzman

(Harvard University Press, 184 pp., $15)

What Do Unions Do? by Richard B. Freeman and James L. Medoff

(Basic Books, 293 pp., $22.95)

Unionism, Economic Stabilization, and Incomes Policies: European Experience by Robert J. Flanagan, David W. Soskice, and Lloyd Ulman

(The Brookings Institution, 705 pp., $36.95, $18.95 paper)

Working Class Hero: A New Strategy For Labor by Stanley Aronowitz

(Pilgrim Press, 229 pp., $18.95)

Liberal America is improbable territory for class-conscious social movements; the prospect of individual betterment has always overwhelmed ideological solidarity. In the United States, the critical masses never reached critical mass. "All socialist utopias," wrote the German sociologist Werner Sombart after his tour of working-class America in 1906, "came to nothing on roast beef and apple pie."

Consequently, our labor movement is doubly anomalous. In a fiercely individualist society, labor is the odd collectivist. Yet as the world's trade union movements go, ours is far less class-conscious than most. America's labor movement is mainly devoted to bread-and-butter "business unionism," something of a contradiction in terms. Organized labor is perforce an adversary institution, because it challenges the capitalist imperative that wages must be set by market forces. Unlike other national trade union movements with their links to socialist parties, however, ours has stopped far short of challenging the rest of the market system. American labor, in short, is too radical for its society, too conservative to surmount hard times with class solidarity.

IN 1950, labor unions were organizing nearly two percent of the work force every year. Last year, they enlisted about two-tenths of one percent—far less than the number of union members lost to retirement and industrial transition. Unions today represent less than 20 percent of the work force, the lowest share in 50 years. The more isolated unions become, the more they live up to their reputation as protectionists and Luddites, representing narrow self-interests rather than the class-wide aspirations of society's downtrodden. The strongest unions today find themselves marooned in declining industries, as the awkward defenders of a proletarian elite.

For labor's numerous critics, the association of unionism with industrial decline is no accident; unions stand accused of having rendered American industry uncompetitive through exorbitant wage demands and rigid work rules. Popular skepticism about unionism is shared by most professional economists. When orthodox economists look at a labor union, they don't see an institution of working-class uplift; they simply see a labor cartel—a political intruder that uses monopoly power to defy the invisible hand. As monopolies, unions are said to distort markets, misallocate resources, and thus retard economic growth. Unions coerce employers to pay workers sums that exceed the natural, "market-clearing" wage. This, in theory, incurs both efficiency costs—capital is misallocated, growth retarded, inflation stimulated—and costs to equity as well, as unionized workers gain at the expense of the unorganized and excessive wages for some produce unemployment for others.

What is to be done? Both the left and the right seem to agree that unions cannot endure as just another selfish special interest group. Radicals like Stanley Aronowitz argue that unions can revive

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only by regaining a broader ideological purpose. Neoclassical economists such as Martin Weitzman suggest implicitly that other social mechanisms can serve the interests of workers more effectively than unions. For a revisionist group of labor economists, including Richard Freeman and James Medoff, as well as Robert Flanagan, David Soskice, and Lloyd Ulman, unions can be encouraged to play a subtle but positive brokering role, even within the battered and contradictory labor movement that exists in America.

A DECADE AGO, unions were assumed to be a fixed part of the industrial landscape, and much policy work by mainstream economists was directed at neutralizing their presumed negative effects. Various "incomes policy" schemes to limit wage increases to real productivity gains were much in vogue during the stagflationary 1970s, when union contracts were held responsible for cost-push inflation. Unions have long since lost the power to fuel inflation, but the search for wage moderation devices continues.

The most intriguing and elegantly simple new proposal in this broad tradition is Martin Weitzman's *The Share Economy*. Weitzman, who teaches economics at MIT, has something far more revolutionary in mind than incomes policies. He proposes to moderate labor costs and increase employment by paying workers shares of company earnings rather than fixed wages. Unions would continue to exist, but with limited power to bargain for wages, and less of a raison d'être.

The idea of profit sharing is not, of course, new. In the coming round of negotiations in the automobile industry, to take a current example, auto makers will be leaning heavily on the U.A.W. to accept a pay system based on profit sharing. What is novel is Weitzman's rationale for it. Paying workers shares of earnings, rather than wages, he contends, will not only provide obvious benefits to the firm, but will also transform the larger economy. He contrasts the market for products with the market for workers. Capitalist economies always have too many goods, and not quite enough jobs. As a matter of technical economics, Weitzman explains, firms are always pumping out products because the marginal cost of making one extra widget is normally less than the average cost of all previous widgets. But in the market for labor, the cost of adding one extra worker usually equals or exceeds the company's average labor cost. Thus, in a wage economy, firms have a bias in favor of moving more merchandise, but against adding more workers.

In a "share" company, however, the total fraction of income devoted to labor compensation would be fixed, with the result that every time a company added a new employee the labor costs for its existing employees would drop slightly. Thus, firms would always be in the market for more workers. The familiar imperfections of laissez-faire capitalism, he insists, such as "alienation of workers, the power of capital over labor, and the reserve army of the unemployed," are in reality "specific consequences of the wage system, not universal consequences of the capitalist system." A share economy liberates the invisible hand to serve full employment.

Weitzman's little book has acquired something close to a cult following among economists, because it purports to solve the single most embarrassing lapse of market capitalism—the failure of the labor market to "clear." In standard economic analysis, relative shifts in demand and supply are mediated by changes in price, with the result that merchandise moves: if the stock market is bearish on AT&T shares, the price keeps falling until enough buyers materialize. Not so the market for labor. At a given time, demand for labor may be so weak that ten million people are out of work, yet the wages of employed people fail to fall. This seems to be a problem quite independent of the power of trade unions; in the early years of the Depression, when unions were very weak and unemployment was above 20 percent, the real wages of employed people actually rose, because prices were falling faster than money wages.

WEITZMAN'S share economy, in theory, provides an ingenious way for labor costs to fluctuate with supply and demand, thus solving the chronic problem of sticky wages over here and unemployment over there. He cites Japan, with its compensation system of large fluctuating bonuses and its full employment, as a society with an implicit share economy. "A share system," he concludes, "promises full employment for all . . . [and] unlike a wage system, no privileged subgroup of workers can aspire to succeed at the expense of disemploying fellow workers and raising prices."

The book is commendable because it offers a genuinely new idea, and because Weitzman writes acceptable prose. Sixth grade arithmetic will get you through the technical sections. Yet the book has serious flaws. Weitzman is not explicitly anti-union, though in his view unions are a principal culprit in our system of rigid wages. In a sense, Weitzman's is the consummate neoliberal book, in which a clever idea replaces a messy social institution. Characteristically, what's missing from the book is an appreciation of power. In a capitalist system, as even George Gilder would agree, the justification for entrepreneurial reward is the risk that the entrepreneur takes. If the workers are to share that risk, then they are becoming co-entrepreneurs; and they deserve not only risk sharing, but some power sharing. Some forms of profit sharing and co-determination enhance the institutional role of unions, while other forms reduce it. Weitzman, despite his protestations of neutrality, deftly sweeps aside issues of power within the firm and implicitly rejects the need for unions as political agents of worker self-interest. His picture of unionism is cardboard.

THE BOOK also has a slightly utopian, one-dimensional quality. As he warms to his subject, the claims become more extravagant. In attributing economic ills to the wage system of compensation, Weitzman ignores the other sources of inflation and productivity slowdown. If the U.S. economy is reeling from Asian industrial competition, worldwide agricultural overproduction, inflated energy prices, and an overvalued dollar, it is not clear how profit sharing will address those aspects of stagflation. Even the most bitterly anti-union economists concede that only a fraction of the inflation of the 1970s was the result of union-driven cost-push. Nor is it clear why a share economy necessarily solves the Keynesian problem of inadequate demand. A ten million dollar payroll divided by 500 workers—or 600 workers—still pumps the same ten million dollars into the economy.

Weitzman also overlooks the downside of a share economy. For almost a century, trade unionists have argued that wages should be "taken out of competition" by way of standardized union contracts that equalize wages

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throughout an industry. That, in theory, is good not only for workers, who avoid being played off against each other; it is also good for the economy because it rewards productive firms and punishes unproductive ones. For example, if GM is more efficiently managed than Chrysler, but both are paying comparable union wages, the more efficient firm, appropriately, will enjoy greater profits. But if the poorly managed firm can compensate by extracting a pay cut from its workers, then inefficiency is rewarded. In effect, Weitzman is arguing that wages should be put back into competition. He is surely right that profit sharing is a good idea, but his case for it is overly stylized and not sufficiently mindful of the political and institutional particulars.

A STRIKINGLY different view of unions and unionism is offered by Richard Freeman and James Medoff, in a rare book by professional economists that recognizes the constructive role of unions as social institutions. Unions, say Medoff and Freeman, have two distinct and contradictory faces. As economic agents, they indeed enhance the monopoly power of some workers, which distorts the allocation of resources. But at the same time, they function as agents of worker representation, which improves the efficiency of the firm as a social organization, and more than offsets labor's negative monopoly power.

Freeman and Medoff borrow this novel formulation (with full credit) from Albert O. Hirschman's short classic of a decade ago, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*. In the usual model of economic man, Hirschman observed, individuals exercise free choices mainly through "entry" or "exit." If prices are too high at Macy's, you shop at Gimbels. If working conditions are oppressive at Chrysler, go apply to GM. In theory, the consumer power to take one's business elsewhere keeps producers efficient. But, said Hirschman, in practice human beings often are constrained by limited resources and competing attachments. In a democracy, a superior alternative to "exit" can be "voice": exercising influence rather than going away mad.

As Freeman and Medoff adapt Hirschman, "In the job market, voice means discussing with an employer conditions that ought to be changed rather than quitting the job. In modern industrial economies and particularly in large enterprises, a trade union is the vehicle for collective voice—that is, for providing workers as a group with a means of communicating with management." Non-union workers are far less likely to speak up, even in firms that invite participation, because they have no protection against reprisal. Workers, it turns out, know a lot. And unions, as an avenue of worker voice, can benefit not just the proles but the bottom line, too. Orthodox economics utterly misses this function of unionism.

Freeman and Medoff are admirably empirical, and they refute one anti-union myth after another. Statistically, it turns out that unionized workers really are more productive than their non-union brothers and sisters, in most industries. The higher wages and the more stable work environment simply attract more productive, reliable workers. Thanks to the premium wages, the job security, and the grievance procedures, labor turnover, and hence retraining costs, are lower. Even in the building trades, supposedly nests of featherbedding, unit-labor costs of union contracts are lower, indicating that the higher-paid union workers are worth the extra expense. The statistics build a case that, on balance, defends unionism—but the case is carefully

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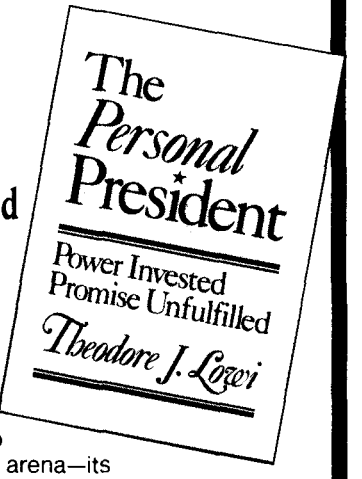

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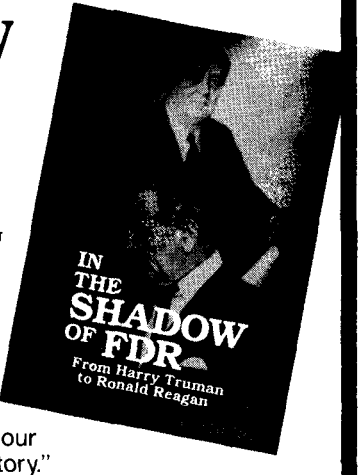

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Robert Kuttner

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qualified. Union coal miners, for example, are in fact overpaid relative to their productivity.

A few unions are still racist, but in general unionized firms have a much higher proportion of decently paid minority workers than non-union ones. Why? Partly because of labor's egalitarian ideology, but more interestingly because unions demand clear, written contracts; and one fringe benefit of clear rules is that discrimination becomes more difficult.

BUT don't unions win their gains at the expense of their non-union brothers and sisters? Again, the reality is intriguingly mixed. Only 20 percent of workers belong to unions, but about half the labor force works for firms that are partly unionized. Companies typically pay their non-union help comparable wages, if only to innoculate against the union virus. Thus the influence of unions indirectly helps countless non-union workers. In oligopolistic industries, unions and companies do in effect conspire to pass along wage costs to the public. But Freeman and Medoff found that between 1975 and 1981, just 2.3 points out of the 68 percent rise in consumer prices was the fault of unions. On balance, it turns out, unions are indeed a force for a more egalitarian wage structure—because standard union contracts tend to equalize wages between blacks and whites, men and women, blue-collar and white-collar workers, and among different firms in the same industry.

Another novel insight is that what unions do is partly a function of how managers respond to the sharing of power. Orthodox economists see unionism as a one-way, distorting influence. But labor-management relations should be seen as a dialectic: managers who can adjust constructively to worker influence can learn a lot from what workers know about the job.

Medoff and Freeman are the heirs to a tradition of economic inquiry known as institutionalism, which draws as much upon political sociology and economic history as upon model-building. Institutionalism, though not radical, has long attracted scholars who found conventional economics both too abstract and too implicitly conservative for their liking. It is the reformist alternative to Marxian economics. In orthodox circles, the institutional school is criticized as hopelessly sociological, the refuge of dilettantes who can't do algebra. The special achievement of Freeman and Medoff is to marry the techniques of modern, computerized data-sorting to the insights of institutional inquiry. As fully initiated members of the economic priesthood, they are comfortable in both the sacred realm of econometrics and the profane, messy world of real institutions.

Freeman and Medoff conclude with the thought that unions might accomplish still more if they enjoyed broader legitimacy, and if labor and management could work more constructively to improve productivity and to cushion the costs of industrial transition. But the American political economy is today moving in just the opposite direction. And the more unions are isolated, the more they conform to the conservative stereotype.

What's missing from Freeman and Medoff is a discussion of the ideological and organizational varieties of American unionism. For all the data and insight, there is little of the texture of shop-floor life and little feeling for what in radical circles is called struggle. This is a weakness not because unions deserve to be romanticized, but because the ideological setting substantially influences what unions in fact do.

A RICH PICTURE of what unions do in the European context is superbly drawn in the encyclopedic Brookings volume, *Unionism, Economic Stabilization, and Incomes Policies: European Experience*. The book was occasioned by a debate that raged in the late 1970s about inflation, unions, and incomes policies. Surprisingly, some European nations, with much more powerful labor movements, nonetheless were better able to achieve social contracts that moderated inflation. Flanagan, Soskice, and Ulman set out to investigate why. The result is a work of far broader general interest than its title suggests. Flanagan and his colleagues have produced the most complete book yet available on comparative trade unionism, with a detailed chapter on unionism in each of nine nations. Like Freeman and Medoff, their aspiration is technical virtuosity, and they succeed admirably. But insights and inferences about politics and ideology are also inescapable.

European unions are as different from each other as they are from their American counterparts. The British labor movement combines militancy with impotence, while Swedish labor is powerful and well mannered. But in nearly every European nation, unions represent a much larger fraction of the work force, despite the fact that most European countries do not permit the closed shop and membership is individual and voluntary. Further, most European unions are explicitly ideological and allied with either social-democratic or communist parties. Unions seem to be able to best perform the constructive social bargaining role ascribed by Freeman and Medoff in political economies that are "corporatist"—small nations where centralized labor and business federations can engage in coordinated negotiation.

WHERE unions have explicit social goals and effective political alliances, they are not afraid to trade wage-restraint and productivity improvements for broader goals such as a more democratic and safer work place, full-employment guarantees, and egalitarian distributive policies. During the boom years before 1979, several European nations (notably Sweden, Norway, Austria, and West Germany) were able to "cheat the Phillips Curve"—achieve full employment without unacceptable inflation—thanks to this model. Labor solidarity also tends to survive bouts of recession much better when unions have an ideological as well as a bread-and-butter purpose.

Flanagan, Soskice, and Ulman are anything but radical. Indeed, their main worry seems to be how to temper union influence rather than reinforce it. Their favorite corporatist country is West Germany, where trade unions are "sensible" and docile; they are nervous about Sweden and Norway, whose unions are equally disciplined but more adventurous. Their cross-cultural analysis complements Freeman and Medoff's, and the two books draw a complex portrait of unionism as something far more varied and adaptable than the usual economist's caricature.

For a more political picture of the limits of American business unionism, one should consult Stanley Aronowitz's *Working Class Hero*. Despite the title, which suggests a dreary piece of socialist realism, this is a clear-eyed and unromantic piece of scholarship, which, like *What Do Unions Do?* and the Brookings book, recognizes above all the diversity and complexity of the actual union experience.

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For Aronowitz, the changing balance between capital and labor in American society fatally undermines what he calls "social contract unionism"—a social bargain in which unions restricted their struggle to wages and working conditions and played the role of constructive and non-ideological junior partner to business. This role was reinforced by the legalistic collective bargaining framework mandated by the Wagner Act, and by the evolving postwar labor relations system, in which the main job of shop stewards and local union officials was the lawyerly policing of contracts, and not the inspiration of struggle and solidarity. Aronowitz also suggests that the bureaucratic stagnation of many unions was the natural result of this class entente.

"What characterized business unionism," he writes, "was that it renounced social goals. Its vision was the welfare of its own members, not of a class of workers . . . business unionism regarded the negotiation and administration of contracts as the far horizon of the labor movement." Aronowitz concludes that "economism"—the bread-and-butter, non-ideological version of struggle so characteristic of the American labor movement (and so detested by socialists)—worked well only as long as the industrial economy did.

THE IMPASSE of organized labor in the 1980s provides a sense of vindication for both ends of the political spectrum. For conservative critics, who include most orthodox economists, the marooning of unionism in declining and seemingly overprivileged bastions confirms the view of unions as enemies of productivity and ultimately enemies even of such working-class goals as full employment. For radicals, the weakened condition of labor today is the definitive proof that "economism" and "class collaboration" were always doomed strategies.

Aronowitz, not surprisingly, thinks the labor movement can revive by organizing new workers, democratizing its ranks, reverting to a more elemental sense of class struggle, and rediscovering the broader social unionism of the CIO glory days. One does not have to share Aronowitz's radicalism to agree that unions require a more expansive social vision than the short-term well-being of their own members if they are to claim a more transcendent purpose

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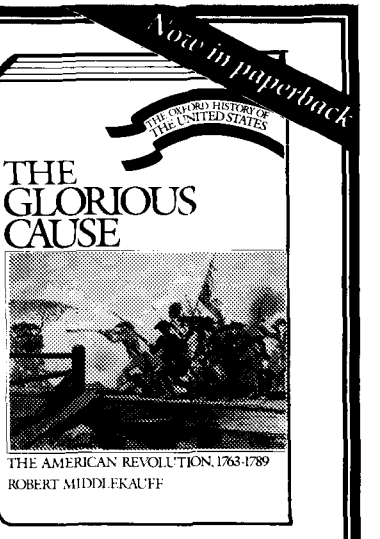

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than the American Medical Association or the used-car lobby.

Indeed, one could imagine a revived labor movement based on Weitzman's profit sharing, or Freeman and Medoff's worker voice, or Flanagan's European-style social contract unionism, or even through Aronowitz's heroic and somewhat exotic working-class solidarity. What is not imaginable is a revived labor movement continuing on its present course.

ROBERT KUTTNER

ASPECTS OF THE MAN

Selected Letters of E. M. Forster
Volume One: 1879-1920
Volume Two: 1921-1970
edited by Mary Lago and P. N. Furbank

(Harvard University Press, 344 pp. and 318 pp., $20 each volume)

E. M. Forster had two careers, one as the author of *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), *The Longest Journey* (1907), *A Room with a View* (1908), *Howards End* (1910), and *A Passage to India* (1924), and a second, rather longer one, as the man who had written those books. If we consider the standards by which character is measured in the novels—of tolerance without insincerity, principle without program, sentimentality without nonsense—we can appreciate a little the size of the job Forster faced in living up to them. These letters are part of the record of his success.

Forster was a case of arrested development. The phrase has a patronizing and pejorative sound, and it is certainly reductive, but of course if the development has been arrested at the right point, it describes a kind of virtue, and not an easy one. When Forster emerged around the time of the Second World War as an exemplary figure for such younger writers as Auden and Isherwood and Lionel Trilling, he did so as an unreconstructed champion of values the First World War was supposed to have made obsolete. Nor is the phrase unfair to Forster's view of himself. "Development" was one of the modern slogans he distrusted most. He declined requests, in interviews about his own work, to discuss his "development as a writer," and he began his lectures on *Aspects of the Novel* (published in 1927) by advising his listeners to ignore bothersome questions about the evolution of the genre, or the influence of one writer on another, by imagining all novelists to be seated in one circular room, writing their novels simultaneously—a conceit the audience of Cambridge dons and their spouses apparently found delightful, and which other commentators have usually found perverse.

But perversity of this sort was a hallmark of Forster's brand of liberal humanism. The liberalism asks that behavior not be judged without a sympathetic understanding of its circumstances, but the humanism answers that in the end circumstances are never an excuse, for in what is most important people are the same. In the case of Forster's criticism, what was most important were the requirements of art; in the case of everything else in his life, it was the requirements of friendship. Those were things, in his view, that did not "develop."

Forster passed his childhood in a kind of Oedipal fairyland. He was still an infant when his father died, and he was raised, an only child, by doting female relatives, and with no male rival anywhere in sight. There is a price to be paid for such joys, of course; for Forster, it included in later life a complicated relationship of mutual dependency with his mother. As a man of letters and a homosexual, he lacked the things that might have precipitated a separation—the chance of marriage or the demands of a professional career—and he and his mother kept house together for 66 years. The story of their relationship is one of the most vivid the letters tell. Of the 446 printed in these volumes, 68 are to Lily Forster, and we can get a sense of the tone her son sometimes felt he had to adopt with her from this item:

> Dearest Mummy
> Poppy is safely arrived, and now he is going to write a disagreeable letter. He wants to ask Mummy to try not to interfere with him so much. If he wants to take his clock to London, let him take it,—if he doesn't want to put little books into an envelope, don't fit them back into it,—if he wants to give away his great coat, let him—if he loses his glove, accept the fact, & ct.—Each thing is so trivial by itself that it is absurd to mention it, but they all add up into a loss of independence.—I expect that if I was working properly I should see it all in truer proportion, and should not make this tiresome fuss, but as it is, the criticisms, and still more the prohibitions, are rather on my mind.

The editors date this letter in June 1922; Forster was 43.

But an insulated childhood also seems to have left Forster, less predictably, with a remarkable sense of self-possession—not egoism or complacency exactly, but a confidence in the value of his own feelings. "I think I do think little of myself," runs an early diary entry that is classic Forster, "but then I think a good deal about it." There is a fair amount of self-deprecation in these letters—rather more than a fair amount, in fact—but almost nothing like an apology. Forster had a practice, when he changed the wording of a letter, of leaving the canceled phrase legible (a feature of the letters that has been preserved here), on the principle that though the word may not have been the one he wanted, there must have been something truthful about it or he would not have written it. Besides the courage of his convictions, he had a rarer (and sometimes exasperating) quality, the courage of his whims.

The circumstances of his early life also gave him an innocence without which, it seems, his first novels would not have been possible. Those books appear to have sprung from an experience that comprised little more than a careful but detached observation of suburban mores, a brief immersion in the atmosphere of turn-of-the-century Cambridge—the Cambridge of G. E. Moore and the Bloomsbury generation of Apostles and Forster's beloved Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson—and an astute reading of the novels of Jane Austen. When he began his career as a novelist, Forster had almost no knowledge, even at second hand, of the world of work, or of courtship, or of

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married life; and until he was 30 (and writing his fourth novel) he had, he once confessed, no real notion of what the sex act consisted of. And yet the novels have a precocious sureness about them. Their vigor surprised his friends—as, at times, did Forster's own: "mystic, silly, but with a child's insight," Virginia Woolf once described him; "oh yes, & something manly & definite too." There is something dreamy in the view of life given in Forster's novels, but it is a dreaminess that has nothing to do with naiveté.

WHATEVER the apple Forster ate, after *Howards End* the stream of inspiration stopped, and the life that had sheltered his talent suddenly seemed to oppress it. Loneliness had something to do with it: he was at the age when college friends start to disappear into married life, and he must have felt something like the way Maurice felt at the marriage of his friends, in the novel of homosexual love that Forster wrote in 1914 in hopes that it would inspire him to write something publishable: "Beautiful conventions received them—while beyond the barrier Maurice wandered, the wrong words on his lips and the wrong desires in his heart, and his arms full of air." Deliverance, of a sort, came in the person of a handsome and gregarious Indian called Syed Ross Masood, whose extravagance of manner Forster found irresistible, and with whom he fell into a love that was reciprocated, but never quite in the way Forster hoped for. And with Masood came India. "He woke me up out of my suburban and academic life," Forster later wrote of him, "showed me new horizons and a new civilisation and helped me towards the understanding of a continent." The first trip to India, a sight-seeing expedition, was made in 1912-13, and Forster returned after the war to work for a year as a secretary to the maharajah of an Indian state—the experiences that led, amid much compositional unhappiness, to the novel that cemented his reputation.

But Masood was more than an escape hatch from domesticity. He embodied for Forster a Forsterian ideal. "Masood gives up duties for friends," Forster wrote in his diary "—which is civilisation." The ethic is Edwardian—it is the ethic of Moore and Dickinson and of Edward Carpenter, the guru of homosexuality and vegetarianism who inspired *Maurice*—but Forster clung to it long past the day human character changed and the death of liberal England; and he clung to it in spite of the seductions of the orthodoxies of the right and the left and the on high that, between the wars, were in contention, as Orwell put it, for men's souls. Forster's own version is famous: "I hate the idea of causes," he declared in "What I Believe" (September 1938), "and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country."

The sentence was echoed exactly a year after in Auden's most Forsterian poem, and Forster later acknowledged the tribute: "Because he once wrote 'We must love one another or die,' " he said of Auden in the 1950s, "he can command me to follow him." Auden himself had second thoughts about the phrase—he wanted to drop the line from his poem, but compromised by changing the "or" to an "and"—and later readers have had second thoughts about the sentiment. We are likely today to feel that our world is too dangerous a place for such a principle of conduct. But these perceptions are relative, and the world could never have seemed more dangerous than it did to a European in 1939.

WHAT seemed right about the ethic to those writers who were, culturally speaking, two generations Forster's junior, was the modesty of its claims. Isherwood called Forster "the anti-heroic hero," and Trilling admired his "refusal to be great." By presenting himself and his values (as he habitually did in the 1930s) as relics, Forster emphasized the fragility of private life, and therefore its preciousness, in the storms of great events. What seems wrong with the ethic now is—as contradictory as this sounds—that there is in the end something a little ungenerous about it. It is not exactly that it seems too resigned, to issue from a place a little too comfortably inside the whale; it is that it somehow suggests that those who can know what friendship is worth are rare, and that what they can invest in each other is more valuable than what might be spent, however inefficiently, for all. Forster thought—and I think he was being true to his own experience in thinking it—not that love was more valuable than it is, but that it was less common.

The editors of these volumes have had the job of choosing from some 15,000 letters, and their selection has naturally involved sacrifices. The edition is valuable for increasing the number of Forster's letters that can be seen without trips to the libraries and private collections where they are stored. Whether this makes the volumes valuable to other, less scholarly sorts of readers—whom they are certainly aimed to attract—is another matter.

THERE are some delightful moments, such as Forster's letter to the D. H. Lawrences after a particularly harrowing visit, during which he had been subjected to a session of double-barreled Lawrentian est-training:

> As for coming again to Greatham, I like Mrs. Lawrence, and I like the Lawrence who talks to Hilda and sees birds and is physically restful and wrote *The White Peacock*, he doesn't know why; but I do not like the deaf impercipient fanatic who has nosed over his own little sexual round until he believes that there is no other path for others to take. . . .

And there are the anecdotes of his visits to the ancient Thomas Hardy:

> T. H. showed me the graves of his pets, all overgrown with ivy, their names on the head stones. Such a dolorous muddle. 'This is Snowball—she was run over by a train . . . this is Pella, the same thing happened to her . . . this is Kitkin, she was cut clean in two—' 'How is it that so many of your cats have been run over, Mr. Hardy? Is the railway near?'—'Not at all near, not at all near—I don't know how it is. But of course we have only buried those pets whose bodies were recovered. Many were never seen again.'

But there is something lacking, due in part to the nature of the project, and in part, I think, to its execution. Forster conceived of letters as a mode of conversation. He usually has his correspondent's latest letter before him as he writes, so that we often feel, reading the letters now, that in hearing only Forster's half of the conversation we are missing what made it precious to his original auditor. And having this sense of obligation to his correspondent, he is usually concerned to present the experiences he is describing in a way that will amuse, and not alarm, his reader. This is especially true of the letters home from India, and many of them are consequently bemusing (not, usually, amusing); but one feels that there is a dimension missing. P. N. Furbank and Mary Lago have done their best with these natural impediments: the annota-

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tion is extraordinarily full, and we sometimes get what is wanted in a book of letters—the sense of a series of letters filling out into a discreet incident. On the whole, though, readers interested in Forster the man will want to go to Mr. Furbank's own superb *Life* before trying the letters.

IT IS on the literary side that I think a real chance has been missed, and some of the editorial choices do not, from what I know of Forster, make sense to me. Forster's friendship with Virginia Woolf is something that will interest most casual readers of these letters. One of its rockier—and from the perspective of literary history, more important—moments concerned Woolf's review of *Aspects of the Novel*. (His letter to her began: "Your article inspires me to the happiest repartee"; hers to him began: "I'm not particularly inspired to repartee by your letter.") But Forster's letter is not included. The other Lawrence—T. E.—was a man much admired by Forster, who wrote him a long letter, the best of his on a literary subject I have seen, about *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, in which he points out what the book's pathos owes to Walter Pater, and cautions Lawrence not to be so severe on his style: "Talks and bits o' fun . . . are awfully useful, they are hostages given by the human mind to the human surface." The letter, though it is mentioned in a note, is not included.

I assume a decision was made not to consider letters to the editor, but some are among Forster's best. One misses particularly the exchange in *The Nation* and *Athenaeum* with T. S. Eliot at the time of D. H. Lawrence's death. (Forster wrote a letter calling Lawrence "the greatest imaginative novelist of our generation"; Eliot responded with a letter explaining that he was hardly qualified to doubt such a judgment, but what exactly did Mr. Forster mean by *greatest*, *imaginative*, and *novelist*? Forster answered that he had to admit he did not know—he only knew that "there are occasions when I would rather feel like a fly than a spider, and that the death of D. H. Lawrence is one of these.") Readers of *A Passage to India* who want to know about Forster's experiences at the court of that fantastic character the Maharajah of Dewas will need to get Forster's *The Hill of Devi*, where his letters from that year are printed. Considerations of space, it is explained, have kept them out of this edition. This is reasonable, but it makes the volumes more like a warehouse and less like a display of treasures. And finally: Forster's first sexual relationship, and in many ways his most touching and remarkable, was with a young Egyptian tram conductor named Mohammed el Adl, whom he met while working in Alexandria during the First World War. Mohammed died, of tuberculosis, in May 1922; a few months later, Forster began a long letter to his dead friend, which he continued for a number of years. I suppose that such a "letter" is really a diary, and it may be that there are bars to its publication I am unaware of. But it seems a shame that in the case of a writer for whom human contacts were the staff of life some portion of such a tribute should not appear among the record of his friendships.

LOUIS MENAND

Louis Menand teaches in the English department at Princeton.

LIBERALISM RESTORED

Benjamin Constant and the Making of Modern Liberalism by Stephen Holmes

(Yale University Press, 352 pp., $27.50)

Between 1789 and 1815 France experimented with every form of government known to 18th-century political science—constitutional monarchy, republic, consulate, and dictatorship. The Revolution was a laboratory that put to the test every political doctrine since Aristotle: Solon the Spartan legislator; the Athenian citizen; the Machiavellian condottiere; Lockian natural right; Rousseau's social contract; and Montesquieu's balance of powers. Each doctrine, each form of government, was found wanting when transferred from the cabinet of philosophers to the brutal field of action. Louis XVI discredited constitutional monarchy. The Terror discredited republicanism. The Consulate discredited Montesquieuian checks and balances. And Bonaparte discredited Machiavelli.

No wonder, then, that when the Allied armies withdrew and left France to reconstruct its political destiny, the Restoration produced a host of thinkers—Bonald on the right, Guizot in the center, and Constant on the left—who had to rethink political science from first principles. All too often dismissed as a transitional episode in the long march of political wisdom toward liberal democracy, the Restoration was in fact a crucial episode in the reconsideration of democracy in the light of what the Terror had legitimized in its name.

Stephen Holmes is a lucid guide to this neglected period. If the key to modern intellectual history is the recovery of the tacit audience of a text, the problem in the Restoration is that the audience changed with baffling rapidity. To take but one example: Constant's lecture "Ancient and Modern Liberty"—the centerpiece of Holmes's interpretation of his thought—was written first in 1798, when the immediate context was the recent memory of the Jacobin Terror. Hence he stressed the necessity of defending the private liberty of citizens against the despotism of enforced public virtue. When delivered as a lecture in 1819, however, the context was now the conservative reaction. Here the moment demanded an attack on the conservative denial of the rights of public participation. The lecture is a palimpsest of apparently contradictory claims: a defense of private liberty and a call to public virtue. But they are not in fact contradictory, if seen to be addressed at different audiences.

Indeed, Holmes argues, this contradictory intellectual maneuvering was at the heart of Restoration liberalism. On the one hand, Constant sought to defend the liberal achievements of the Revolution—freedom of the press, assembly, and speech, the establishment

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of representative government and the disestablishment of the Church—against the reactionaries of the 1820s. On the other hand, he defended a property-based suffrage against Jacobin democracy. Historians of political thought like John Plamenatz, who believe that Constant's liberalism was undemocratic, fail to understand that for Constant a representative government elected by a limited property-based suffrage was designed to reconcile liberalism and democracy, that is, to chart a middle course between the Scylla of monarchical reaction and the Charybdis of Jacobin Terror.

According to Holmes, the central strength of Constant's liberalism lay in its capacity to reconcile two ideas of freedom usually considered antithetical: the passive freedom of private life (Locke's "enjoyment of property") with the active freedom of civic participation (Rousseau's civic virtue). Constant's central insight was that a form of political democracy which left no protection for the citizen's private rights would end in Jacobin Terror; while a liberty confined to freedom of property, and not allowing a right to elect representative institutions, would end in reactionary dictatorship.

AS HOLMES sees it—and here the influence of J. G. A. Pocock's work is evident—modern liberalism is a sustained attempt to replace the Greek and Roman model of citizenship, which so haunted the early modern imagination, with a limited civic allegiance better suited to the modern world of private property, social classes, and the division of labor. Holmes does not devote as much attention as he might have to Constant's sociology, to the analysis of modern commercial civilization that underpinned his politics. In this respect, it is possible that his rival Guizot's sociological appreciation of modernity was sharper, as an excellent recent study by Pierre Rosanvallon demonstrates. Although Constant studied at Edinburgh, his mature work does not seem to be influenced by Adam Smith's sociology of modern commercial society. Whatever theory of modernity underpinned Constant's politics, it owed little to political economy.

This in itself points to a difference between French and English liberalism in the same period. Neither Guizot nor Constant understood the economic as the determining category of politics. For them the problem was quite different. English theorists of the new art of political science could take the problem of sovereignty and political legitimacy for granted, but for the French the abyss of political chaos was never far from their imaginations. Constant himself was 21 at the time of the 1789 Revolution, and he died months after the Revolution of 1830. His whole thought is dominated not by the new force of the economic, but by the recurrent and the distinctively French collapse of the political. Given that 20th-century liberalism, especially in France, is often seen as merely the politics of laissez-faire, a return to Constant is a refreshing rediscovery of the extent to which French liberalism at its origins was a discourse on the primacy of the political over the economic.

Another interesting surprise, as Holmes argues, is that Constant's liberalism was not underpinned by the impoverished psychology of classical utilitarianism. Indeed a romantic critique of utilitarian self-interest was the centerpiece of Constant's history of religion. As a renewed appreciation of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* has also shown, liberalism is not yoked to the shallow individualism of economic man; instead it reposes historically on a rich and heterogeneous set of theories about the sociable and cooperative individual.

The most original element in Holmes's archaeology of French liberalism is the emphasis he places on Constant's critique of the romanticism of sincerity. Theocratic reactionaries and

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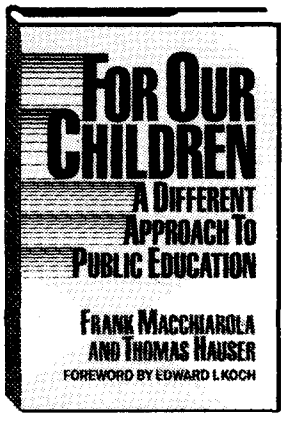
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Jacobin revolutionaries both share, Constant argued, a hatred of hypocrisy in politics. Both insist that people should always say what they mean and mean what they say. Yet all of human life requires a degree of dissembling. Fanatics of sincerity simply develop a hypocrisy all their own—a mask of virtue—all the more dangerous because in their self-righteousness they forget it is a mask. Constant's harshest denunciations were for those who justified Terror in the name of virtue, religious inquisitions in the name of sincerity, political witch-hunts in the name of truth. Some of his most penetrating observations unmask the motives lurking beneath the Spartan exterior of revolutionary enthusiasm. Consider this brilliant passage on the revolutionary crowds he had witnessed in Paris in the 1790s:

> If during the outbreak of even that best prepared upheaval, you watch carefully the obscure ranks of the blind and subjugated populace, you will see that the people (even as it follows its leaders) casts its glance ahead to the moment when these leaders will fall. And you will discern within its artificial exaltation, a strong combination of analysis and mockery. People will seem to distrust their own convictions. They will try to delude themselves by their own acclamations and to reinvigorate themselves by jaunty raillery. They foresee, so to speak, the moment when the glamour of it all will pass.

This Flaubertian irony was an effective blow against that nostalgia for the virtuous ardor of the republican crowd that has haunted the French political imagination ever since.

Liberalism, like anything else, can only retain its capacity to inspire conviction in the present if scholarship rescues its past from the inertial tendency of political rhetoric to turn its tradition into shallow or comforting caricature. If the test of historical scholarship is to make the past seem vital to us again, to make a forgotten author live and seem to speak to us, Stephen Holmes has certainly passed the test.

MICHAEL IGNATIEFF

Michael Ignatieff is the author of *The Needs of Strangers*, recently published by Viking Press.

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YELLING FIEND, SOFT CHILD

Louise Bogan: A Portrait by Elizabeth Frank

(Knopf, 460 pp., $22.95)

It is a brave, indeed a dogged, biographer, and perhaps an obsessed one—a biographer with *corresponding recognitions*—who would undertake, given the documents already before the public or behind the private accounting, a portrait of this sternly lyric poet. Consider the circumstances likely to dissuade a delineating pursuit: Bogan's poems have been several times collected, and in 1968, two years before her death at 73, they were once again published, as *The Blue Estuaries* (Ecco Press keeps the book in print)—some 100 poems of a relentlessly topiary art. Bogan's criticism was collected in 1955 and, one might say, recollected 15 years later in *A Poet's Alphabet*—chiefly the articles on poetry from 38 years of semiannual reviews in *The New Yorker*. Bogan's letters (the lioness's share) were published in 1973, articulating in the liveliest terms her friendships with Edmund Wilson, Theodore Roethke, Rolfe Humphries, Morton Zabel, and William Maxwell, as well as her loyalties to Yeats, to Auden (a mutual admiration), and most significantly to Rilke, who for her was the consummate poetic identity. Elizabeth Frank puts it nicely when she says that Bogan recognized herself in Rilke as "anarchic, submissive, patient, and finally ecstatic in the face of pleasure or pain." Then in 1980 Ruth Limmer, who had edited the letters and the criticism, stitched together Bogan's prose (all except her short stories, which remain scattered in *The New Yorker*'s files) into *Journey Around My Room*, a "mosaic" of autobiographical fragments that com-

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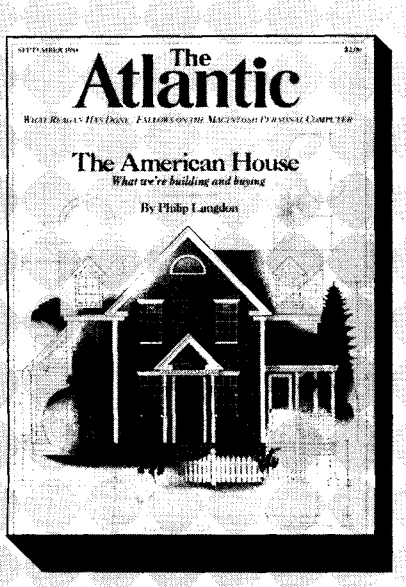

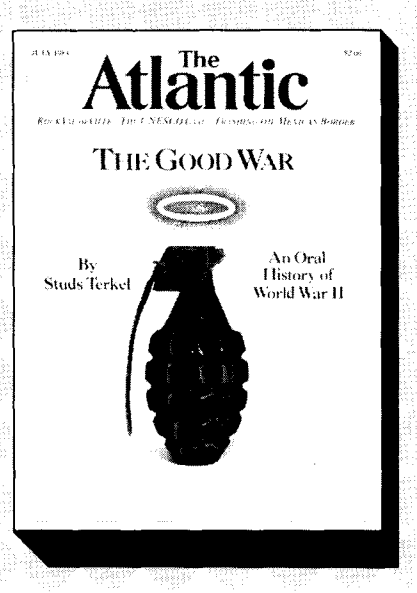

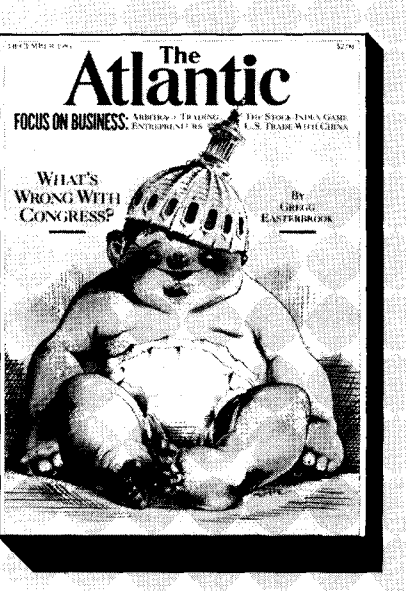

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plement the letters with an inward version of the outward vision. With all this in hand, if not in mind, much as in the case of Virginia Woolf on even more extravagant terms, who needs a biography?

The answer is that Elizabeth Frank needed such a thing, which is why her "portrait" is the finely shaded and impassioned production that it is. Though she has been scholarly and even scrupulous in her sleuthing, Frank is after some larger image than interviews and three-by-five cards could produce. (For example, the composite figure of Wallace Stevens lately offered by Peter Brazeau: mercilessly heterogeneous, such compilations make us realize that biography without passion is a hard-boiled egg without salt.) What is vouchsafed here, I find, is a careful cartography of a woman's struggle to become what she knew was in her to be, against baffling odds of psychological abuse.

The wound seems to have been inflicted at once, by what the psychotherapist calls the parental situation, and Bogan spends a good deal of her poetic wealth in accounting for the pain. "The young will be broken," she declares, "and all time to endure . . ." and again, discovering the division that crippled her marriages, her motherhood, and even—and most of all—her solitude: "the gentle self splits up/into a yelling fiend and a soft child." Extraordinarily sensitive to Bogan's own report of the conflict, Frank speaks of the young poet's gifts as having the inextinguishable strength of all powers "as natural as they are compensatory," and states, with absolute trust in her informant (Bogan herself, I mean), that

> by the age of eight, or even perhaps as early as five or six, Louise Bogan was an exile from conventional life, and had become "what I was for half my life: the semblance of a girl, in which some desires and illusions had been early assassinated: shot dead" . . . In the end she forgave herself her own failures of love and judgment, as well as those who had failed her. Her darkest secrets she kept even from herself, giving them to her poetry, in which they remain sealed forever against direct inspection.

Thereby the portrait-painter suggests how she will read the poems—not for evidence, not for confirmation, but as a mystery "sealed" and therefore sustained, to be honored and respected *as* a mystery. It seems to me Frank ranks Bogan too high, and praises her poems too lavishly (though all "ranking" is a convenience merely, and like all conveniences doomed to supersession). Still, that is irrelevant; she has written one of the very few life-studies of an artist—a woman, an intellectual outsider, a traumatized imagination—that seek to follow the impulses toward survival and productivity, and that trace the choking-off, the subsidence into bitterness and *ressentiment*, with vigilant patience. Frank, who says "I" for the first time on page 285, is focused on how the spirit prevails, where it prevails, over its cankers and corruptions; how "what had been the means of escape would have to become the means of return." Her subject (never her object: Frank is careful to avoid the easy detractions of psychoanalytic inquisition) is forever resolving to do better, writhing in the coils of her parental python:

> I cannot become [she wrote in 1933, when she was about as old as Emily Brontë writing "Cold in the Earth"], all at once, a detached, self-delighting individual. My own ideas are steeped in a romantic brew, however much I hate the color and the stain. I was fed on 19th-century literature, on symbolist poetry, on provincial morality. My two defences against the nonsense in myself and in others are my realism and my wit. Perhaps I can keep some inner balance with the help of these two, and with the help of routine and *willed* creation.

As Elizabeth Frank shows us, this admirable self-knowledge was frustrated by precisely what it knew: Bogan's peculiar rage for order in her making—"my gift depends on the flash—on the *apercu* . . . One can only remain open and wait"—was defeated by the notion that her poems must happen to her, must well up from within like an unopposable tide. All else would be trivial, even the ambition of assured talent ("ambition is automatically stopped by the thought of death; it becomes trivial and vulgar"), even her impatience with the world's mediocrity and mendacity ("by hatred of others' faults let me be cured!"). The last 30 years of this tormented life (high-spirited, certainly, as the letters reveal, but for the most part doomed and doom-acknowledging)—the years when a Colette and a Hannah Arendt were doing their finest work against psychic odds quite as repressive—were starved, soured, and silenced. "The mystery draws in," she wrote at the end, from what seems an absolute loneliness: "One needs the help of the imagination to die."

How politely Elizabeth Frank puts the case for the obstacles and embarrassments of this self-harassing intellect:

> With those she considered better educated than herself she was fiercely, furiously competitive, simultaneously defensive and aggressive, blindly judging the use of philosophical discourse in criticism as intellectual fakery and exhibitionism, and greatly oversimplifying the virtues of criti-

Sleep

Another nomenclature.
Rolling downhill, arms overhead,
my words urging a different voice;
and foreknowledge, sometimes dread,
like Cassandra watching fire.
Sometimes lost in a corridor
and profoundly sad at the emptiness;
other moments, blind in that hall
but certain of its end, toward which I walk.

Not just neurons shocked into motion,
but the hidden fear of a buried loss
mapped with a compass whose valence
is desire. We want what we already know,
blueprints to a house, and children
filling each room before it is built.
All sorts of structures, a close geometry
tugged like film across one's forehead.

Some nights, my crying child who really cries.
That's easy. Rise, turn on the light and speak;
at least I answer one set of fears.
Worst, my father calling me for help,
his voice loud as the one he used to call
me home for supper, and locked at a distance.
Sleep, an oblique record of expense,
more than a collage of shapes, sounds, and colors
because our careful covers make it so.

Wyatt Prunty

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> cism which instead incorporated 'images' . . . She thought of Burke, Blackmur, Ransom, Tate, even Eliot, Richards and Empson—perversely, defiantly, even desperately—as an encroaching phalanx of abstract, over-ingenious and deliberately obscure mandarins, out to safeguard their academic and social prestige by demonstrating the need for a priestly class of explicators and interpreters.

She had the arrogance of the self-educated, which in her case was not so much protective as aggressive, and I believe—on Frank's showing, if not from the warrant of the poems—that her anger with the literary world, which she believed regarded her as a "dumb Mick," with her parents who left her unable to trust others, with herself most of all, brought her poetry to its unrealized end. "I don't want to confess," she wrote to William Maxwell in 1945, "I want to create; and the hatred of confessing has been one thing that has held me up all these years." The ambiguity of "held me up"—sustained/defeated—is here agonizingly apt. Cautiously, sometimes reading so closely as to be invisible, Elizabeth Frank is astonishing in her capacity to take this up, to understand how the life played itself out:

> The woman who found it so difficult to write her autobiography was able, when she *translated* her knowledge of herself into her appreciative knowledge of others, to put her life to account, and moreover to keep faith with art in the process . . .

Frank has written a book no reader of Bogan's published work and remains could have imagined. It is a tragic account, and the more exceptional for being patient with the tragedy, not hot in pursuit of easy diagnoses, of replacement strategies. In 1941, when she had written what were essentially her last poems, Auden wrote Louise Bogan: "Unless you lose your head, your poetic career is only just beginning . . . What you do now depends on nothing except your talent." I am calling it a tragedy that Bogan could not acknowledge a dependence on talent as the reason for writing poetry. Unless she could transcend (and subvert) talent with each poem, she would choose silence over mere gift, and that is the choice Elizabeth Frank, with passionate originality in her method, searches out. She does not "judge" Bogan, whom she describes as "cherishing the notion that a deep affinity existed between the artist and the criminal," but she offers her life, and her "task of dissembling confession through symbol and form," as a cautionary emblem. The triumphs of Bogan's poetry, and of her spirit, are shown to be won over and from the indissociable disgraces of her character (self-confessed, homemade, ultimately cherished). This is not a work of literary criticism only, or of biographical exposure merely. It is a meditation on how to live, traced through the agon of a difficult woman's art.

RICHARD HOWARD

Richard Howard is a poet and translator working on a study of André Gide.

ROMANCE À LA MODE

Hotel du Lac
by Anita Brookner

(Pantheon, 184 pp., $13.95)

"From the window all that could be seen was a receding area of grey." If this opening line makes you feel claustrophobic, then you'd better not read the rest of *Hotel du Lac*, the novel that recently won England's prestigious Booker Prize. Anita Brookner is not the sort of writer to begin with a careless description; this sentence depicts autumn fog on a Swiss lake, but it also metaphorically focuses the novel on an intensely subjective realm extending from here to the windowsill and no further.

The Hotel du Lac is a place of exile—a small, discreet resort in Switzerland where an unmarried 39-year-old Englishwoman with the forlorn name of Edith Hope has been sent, by concerned friends in London, to live down some "apparently dreadful thing." We don't find out what this thing is until two-thirds of the way through the book, contenting ourselves in the meantime with hints about a secret affair Edith has been having with a married man named David.

Edith is not the only unattached woman at the hotel. There are an aging, deaf Contessa neglected by an ungrateful son; a beautiful anorexic named Monica who keeps herself alive by eating cake; and Mrs. Pusey, a filthy-rich widow whose sole occupation is spending money on her own vanity and that of her clone daughter, Jennifer. Prowling among these female disasters—for that is how Edith Hope views them all, including herself—is a lone man, the courtly, cynical Mr. Neville, "who looks rather like that portrait of the Duke of Wellington that was stolen from the National Gallery. . . ."

Perhaps this cast of characters does not sound claustrophobic to the reader. Certainly the writer of the American edition's jacket blurb insinuates, as only the writers of jacket blurbs know how to insinuate, that the plot contains some spicy possibilities: ". . . the elegant, enigmatic Mr. Neville . . . tries to persuade Edith that perfect selfishness is the way to perfect happiness . . . Edith is surprised to learn that the proposed misbehavior involves Mr. Neville himself."

I am aware that book reviewers do not normally quote from jacket blurbs. But this blurb, with its innuendo of sexual secrets, is too exquisite an irony to overlook. Believe me, there's about as much spice in this novel as there is in English cooking. A bit of vinegar, perhaps, as Edith stakes out her moral superiority to everyone in the hotel, including Mr. Neville. But that's about as mouth-watering as it gets.

I shouldn't forget David, who first shows up on Edith's doorstep after exchanging three words at a party, and thereafter drops by for a quick boff every four to six weeks. Unfortunately this is all we learn about the affair, except that Edith's passion is strong enough to prompt an occasional sigh—"Oh David, David"—and several lengthy letters, which she doesn't mail. Actually, Edith doesn't do much of anything. She earns her living writing "romance fiction" under the "more thrusting name" of Vanessa Wilde, but at the Hotel du Lac, she is simply too wrung

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out to do more than read, walk, bathe, and eat. Her idea of suspense seems to be waiting in the salon to see what Mrs. Pusey will wear to dinner.

Nor is the conversation stimulating. This is no *Magic Mountain* or *Ship of Fools* attempting to reflect, through an assortment of social types, the tensions of a larger world. In fact, it scarcely seems to matter what century we are in. And although Edith deplores the petty preoccupations of her fellow stranded females, she does not rise above them with any broader concerns of her own. As for her London indiscretion, it is prudent of Miss Brookner not to reveal the details any sooner. If she did, the reader's interest might go from limp to flaccid.

I MEAN that last connotation. Edith is not terribly interesting to men—a fact which makes her grimly reflective, and therefore (presumably) interesting to readers. But is she? Clearly Miss Brookner wishes to suggest, through the device of making Edith a romance author, an ironic contrast between woman's happily-ever-after fantasies and the pay-as-you-go reality of their traffic with men.

In the end this irony is resolved unexpectedly, as Vanessa Wilde the purveyor of romance becomes Edith Hope the defender of same, preferring her smidgen of true love (with David) to socially respectable but bloodless marriage. I say "unexpectedly" because, until recently, it was a cliché of feminist novels that romantic love is merely an illusion, a razzmatazz used by men to lure women into bed—or worse, into the coils of domesticity.

But clichés change with time, and I suppose feminist fiction has moved past the phase of requiring Edith to kick over the traces of romantic expectation in favor of what used to be called "personhood." The trendsetters have lately noticed that career women, like other human beings, find it hard to be totally self-sustaining. Emotional needs are back on the agenda, so I guess it's O.K. for today's literate heroine to live and breathe for her next lovers' tryst.

The trouble is, this scrutiny-then-acceptance of romance is not by itself sufficient to make Edith interesting. We still have to follow her, in a state of hyper-rationalizing self-absorption, through all those walks, baths, meals, and petty conversations. I would be delighted to learn that Miss Brookner had written the jacket blurb herself, because then I could credit her with the book's only real comedy: the disjunction between the blurb's lip-smacking promotional prose and the text's tight-lipped decorum.

The reader is probably wondering: If this novel is really so claustrophobic, how did it win the classiest literary prize in Great Britain? One explanation might be that it works as a comedy of manners, capturing a peculiar mode of frustration, which occurs whenever the English encounter one another in a foreign place. Instead of avoiding each other or plunging into forced intimacy (as Americans are apt to do), the English observe the proprieties. But the more rootless the situation, the more trapped the English become by their own politeness toward strangers they would just as soon ignore.

Edith's struggle with this frustration may strike the English funny bone, but I fear the real explanation for *Hotel du Lac's* success lies in its deliberate embrace of the "women's fiction" genre. Like romance, the term "women's fiction" has swung from anathema to praise—as witnessed by the feminists who now, instead of pointing out that women write about a universal range of subjects, defiantly proclaim that there can be no subject more universal or compelling than a women's search for true love.

By this new standard, Miss Brookner has written a terribly sophisticated fiction, which not only comments on a certain pulp tradition, but also elevates that tradition to the level of art, by rejecting those who would reject it. In the end it is respect, not irony, that gets paid to Edith's line of work. In other words, *Hotel du Lac* is a Harlequin Romance for highbrows.

MARTHA BAYLES

Martha Bayles is TV critic for *The Wall Street Journal*, and has recently completed a novel, *Boston Common*.

MIDDLE-CLASS HUSTLERS

Glitz
by Elmore Leonard

(Arbor House, 251 pp., $14.95)

You've heard about Elmore Leonard—probably sometime in the last ten days. After a long career of writing pulp Westerns and crime novels, he's hit it big with *Glitz*. The book, which follows Miami detective Vincent Mora to Atlantic City as he looks for the killer of a dumb, young Puerto Rican prostitute named Iris whom he once had a crush on, has made the Book of the Month Club and is said to be on its way to Hollywood. But the excitement isn't just hype. The critical measure of Leonard is also routinely high. His dialogue is edgy, hip, inarticulate; his plot twists are unnerving; his characters are as familiar and surprising as a new friend.

So why am I going to say bad things about him? Mainly to try and help preserve his reputation. The swell of critical praise for Leonard's last several books has grown into a mighty tsunami of raves for *Glitz*. Leonard is this year's model of the sudden literary celebrity lifted from obscurity, a regular William Kennedy or Martin Cruz Smith or John Kennedy Toole. I happen to think Leonard's writing is both more fun and more evocative of American life, of its hustle, glamour, ugliness, and yearning, than any of the above. But what's best about him is getting lost in, well, in the glitz.

The hint of social observation in the title indicates why *Glitz* is a slight disappointment. Detective Mora walks into the Atlantic City scene trying to figure out who threw Iris off the 18th-floor balcony of a new condominium, and soon realizes he's got to find an old enemy, a psychopathic rapist named Teddy Magyk. The title has announced that this book is about the world of 24-hour gambling, hundred dollar bills, complimentary suites, and

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just-flew-in-from-Dallas types, and, in a vivid and exciting way, it is. But this self-consciousness diffuses the duel of Magyk and Mora. In his previous novels Leonard never let the bright lights get in our eyes.

IT IS the utter lack of self-consciousness that makes Leonard's earlier books so authentic. He does not tint his evocation of the American scene with affection or contempt or even self-importance. He just gives it to you: an inner-city liquor store, a sprawling suburb, a divorcée's home, a hotel bar, a Miami tourist motel. He captures American life precisely because he doesn't belabor it. He makes it astonishingly real by acting like it is simply a great setting for a crime story.

And it is. Typically Leonard throws us in with some middle-class Americans who, by dumb luck or criminal calculation, are within reach of their main chance—and who are wondering how to grab it. What makes us enjoy these characters is not so much how they do wrong as how their scams fit into the background of their ordinary middle-class lives. In *Swag* (1976) Frank Ryan, ex-car salesman, and Ernest J. Stickley, hot-wire artist, go into the armed robbery business in suburban Detroit. They quarrel, they talk up the bored women sunbathing around the pool of the apartment complex where they live. They throw parties, vacuum the Doritos out of the carpet in the morning, and stash their cash in a box of Oxydol under the kitchen sink. Stick's got a crush on a neighbor who he thinks turns tricks on the side, but he winds up in bed with Arlene, one of the sunbathers who is smart enough to let him think he made the first move. So what's he supposed to do when they fall in love and she lets it slip that she knows how he pays the rent?

Leonard doesn't take this world where everyone is inventing themselves any more seriously than the people who live in it. (Ryan tells the girls by the pool that he and Stickley are consultants in the business of "sales motivation.") He just sits back and enjoys the whirl of people moving in from somewhere else, looking for a chance to get down, figuring out how to move up, or just going along for the ride.

Stickley, who drifted to Detroit from Oklahoma, resurfaces in Miami as the title character of *Stick* (1983). He wants to go straight but winds up a chauffeur for Barry Stam, a self-made dope lawyer with vanity plates on his Mercedes that read "BS-1." Barry likes to talk as if he graduated from a Liberty City street corner instead of from Wake Forest Law. His investment adviser is a pretty, preppy Wall Street liberal with a brother who pitched for the Red Sox. She enjoys the danger of rubbing shoulders with the lowlife, and toys with the idea of making Stick her personal rehabilitation project. Meanwhile, out in the parking lot of Barry's country club, the black chauffeurs trade stock tips overheard from the white folks talking in the back seat. It's the free-for-all of American life.

Leonard is too interested in the flaws in his characters and in the details of the world they live in to be classed with three-chord crime hacks like John D. MacDonald and George V. Higgins. His company, for better or worse, is Bobbie Ann Mason and John Updike. The restlessness, the insecurities, the private resentments, the quiet ambitions, the best-laid plans that Mason and Updike evoke are all there in Leonard—and often with less posturing. When a Bobbie Ann Mason character opens the refrigerator and sees a ham, it is bathed in the soft florescent glow of the Iowa Writer's Workshop and we're supposed to hear the bell of Meaning go ting-a-ling. When Stick goes to the fridge for a Stroh's, it's because he's thirsty.

Leonard's chief flaw is that no matter where he drives you, you still go through familiar intersections. The trouble isn't that he relies on a prototypical hero. There's no harm in knowing that the central character of a Leonard book is likely to be a shrewd operator with a yearning for a good woman (or two). He'll be decent, divorced, smart, and, once in a while, a son of a bitch. In the same way it's not bothersome that he's likely to live or be from Detroit. But I find it a little distracting when the mechanics of plot and character recur from book to book.

This kind of perfunctory writing compounds the self-consciousness of *Glitz*. In *Stick* Ernest J. has a memorable yet deflating evening in the successive company of a *Playboy*-type knockout, an unhappily married woman, and

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the working girl of his dreams. The situation is faintly echoed in *Glitz*, where the same three types wind up awkwardly face-to-face in Mora's hotel room. Mora also has exactly the same instantaneous rapport with the married woman in this trio as the hero of *Cat Chaser* (1982) has with the wife of an exiled Latin torturer. Both women have self-made, stolid, dense husbands, and both first meet the hero in connection with a nubile prostitute whom the hero has befriended. These recycled devices drag *Glitz* to a flat conclusion. Toward the end, you get the sneaking suspicion Mora's just cruising Leonard country in search of a plot twist.

So let's leave well enough alone. Leonard's books are a revelation precisely because he is such a self-effacing writer, because he makes his point by never making any points. He deserves his success. But if he were a character in his own books, someone would be pulling a fast one on him right about now—just when he thinks he's got it made. Keep your eye on the ball, Elmore.

JEFFERSON MORLEY

TRB, *from page 4*

that usually means that he believes its assets are not mobilized efficiently, and he is willing to stake a good deal of money to prove it. Typically a management may be holding on to unprofitable divisions, which others might run more profitably, because of sheer inattention or unwillingness to admit failure.

In the Phillips takeover, the raider's offer has now obliged management as a counteroffer to reimburse its stockholders for their patience. Of course, Phillips will have to shed some of its properties to do that and become a smaller company. So what? The shareholders already have won a big victory. This would not have happened if the vast army of owners had not rebuffed Phillips's first chintzy response to the raiders. Crucial to this rebuff was the decision of some big institutional holders and of the pension funds of several state governments, including New York and California, to team up with both the adventurous raider and the small investor in saying to management, "Enough." This is likely to be a precedent. If it encourages more raids against self-satisfied managements, good. Phillips management now concedes that the company will be stronger and more disciplined as a result of the takeover struggle.

Targeted and potentially targeted managements have behaved shamelessly and frantically. The first tactic is to engage some high-priced legal and banking talent to hang some garlic around the corporation's neck to ward off the evil spirit. Next the managers provide themselves with "golden parachutes," in case their maneuvers fail.

Once these chores are done, managers really go to work. To safeguard their jobs, they trash their companies by acquiring anything that will make them unattractive and unpalatable to suitors. You can't imagine the junk with which corporate managements encumber themselves and their shareholders in order to ward off a raider. There is now a Wall Street specialty in placing unpromising but expensive assets with already burdened corporations whose managements suddenly want even more debt and even less cash flow. The courts have been no protection here; they will not second-guess a "business judgment."

Some raiders have been content to lose the big prize if they get paid off in what is now called greenmail. They cry all the way to the bank, and leave the ordinary stockholders more exposed and less well-off than before. This could be prevented by a small change in the law that would forbid management from paying off any shareholder or group at a premium above market without offering the same deal to everyone else.

When management receives an offer from a bidder, its proper responsibility is to go out and see if someone else out there is willing to bid more. Don't be surprised, then, if someone like Boone Pickens tries to start a populist prairie fire for some political guarantees of the long-abused rights of that big bloc of voters, the 40 million Americans who buy, sell, and own stock. It's certainly not a cause that ranks with the needs of the hungry, but it could sure muster great middle-class clout. No prominent Democratic politician has grasped this as a worthwhile issue. After more than half a century of virtually unrestrained managerial dominion over corporate life, it's time to reunite the owners of equities with some of their rights.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Enlarging the Change: The Princeton Seminars in Literary Criticism, 1949-1951 by Robert Fitzgerald (Northeastern University Press). On hand at the inspiring birth of the Gauss Seminars. (Reviewed 3/18/85)

In Custody by Anita Desai (Harper & Row). A portrait of the country few foreigners know: the India that is Indian. (3/18/85)

Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages by Jeffrey Burton Russell (Cornell University Press). A scholarly study of the devil's history and an impassioned meditation on the problem of evil. (3/18/85)

The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam by Said Amir Arjomand (University of Chicago Press). An informative study of the relation between religion and state in Iran and Islam. (2/25/85)

The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers by T. J. Clark (Knopf). An original study of a decisive turning point in the history of art. (2/18/85)

For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America by Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski (The Free Press). A superb single-volume survey of American military policy. (2/11/85)

Equal Distance by Brad Leithauser (Knopf). An accomplished novel about Americans in Japan. (1/21/85)

The Willowbrook Wars: A Decade of Struggle for Social Justice by David J. Rothman and Sheila M. Rothman (Harper & Row). A chronicle of one case at the heart of the de-institutionalization controversy. (2/4/85)

The Intellectual Follies: A Memoir of the Literary Venture in New York and Paris by Lionel Abel (Norton). The life and times of the literary-political-Jewish intellectuals from 1930 onward. (2/11/85)

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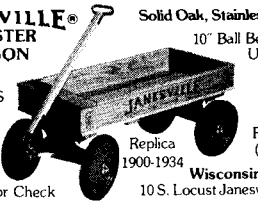

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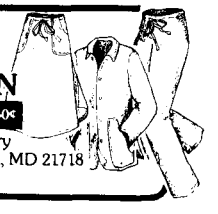

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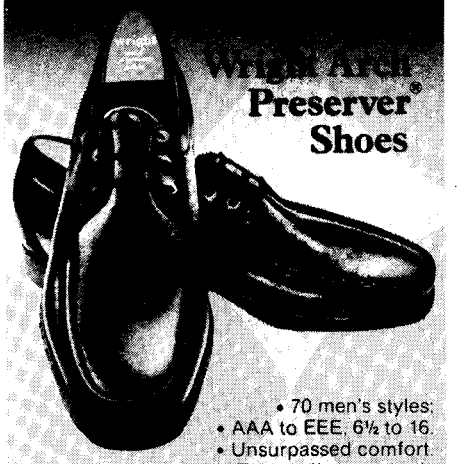

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Antennas

THE ANTENNAS ATOP the Soviet Embassy here seem to have become a popular tourist attraction. There is always a knot of people in front of the stern, squat building on 16th Street, staring up in amazement at the metal forest on the roof, and making slightly nervous jokes about the amount of radiation it is spewing out. I am more curious about what the antennas are sending toward Moscow. Secret plans for our nuclear submarines? NATO reports on troop readiness? What about a summary of Strobe Talbott's *Deadly Gambits*, or a copy of *The Washington Post's* latest scoop on space shuttle payloads? I hate to think of the number of spies the CIA is presumably employing in the Soviet Union simply to find out what their Soviet counterparts can discover by reading *Aviation Week and Space Technology*. Then again, the sheer amount of necessary reading must make life hell for the Soviet government's American specialists. I wonder if they have to plow through all the frivolous features that editors of "serious" magazines, solicitous of their readers' attention span, insert in their publications. Like this frivolous feature. Well, comrades, you have my sympathy.

MY NEIGHBORHOOD, commonly called Embassy Row, has its own, slightly less impressive collection of rooftop antennas. Just down the block from my Q Street apartment, for instance, the Rumanian Embassy has a large, oval-shaped one that arches obtrusively up over Sheridan Circle on one side, and peers down into my back yard on the other. I see its owners only on rare occasions—either at the local supermarket, trying to make their Rumanian-accented English understandable to the Korean immigrants who work the checkout counters, or walking home past the Taras Shevchenko monument, an ugly block of granite on 22nd Street dedicated to "the captive nations." Taras Shevchenko was a virulently nationalist Ukrainian poet of the 19th century, and on the monument's 25th anniversary this fall, bus-loads of Ukrainian-Americans converged on it carrying bright blue-and-yellow Ukrainian flags and banners depicting a Soviet bear digging into a map of the Ukraine with bloody teeth and claws. But the Rumanians are used to propaganda, and pay Taras Shevchenko no heed. And in any case, they have it better than the Soviets. A year ago the District of Columbia government changed the address of the Soviet chancery to One Andrei Sakharov Square.

PRESS BREAKFASTS are an insidious form of bribery. Half-awake journalists are plied with orange juice and pancakes, and politely harangued by fully awake lobbyists in the hope they will produce a story. Last week my colleague Tony Blinken and I accepted the bribe from the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, which was gearing up to lobby for the Bipartisan Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985. We were brought to a pleasant dining room in the Capital Hilton, and duly given our orange juice and pancakes (also croissants, rolls, bacon, scrambled eggs, and coffee). We met seasoned veterans of the press-breakfast circuit such as Dorothy Ridings, president of the League of Women Voters, known to a hundred million Americans as the hostess of the presidential debates, but surprisingly down-to-earth. And we were harangued with short, simple speeches (the organizers obviously knew the attention span of half-awake journalists). Actually, though, the organizers made some good points. For one thing, they pointed out some of the more ridiculous consequences of the Supreme Court's *Grove City* decision of March 1984, which limits the scope of federal enforcement of civil rights at schools and universities that receive federal aid. In one case, the Justice Department refused to investigate a complaint of sexual harassment by a student at Northeastern University, because the alleged incident did not take place in a building built with federal loans. A bill designed to iron out this kink in the law was sabotaged by conservatives at the end of the last Congress (see "Down the Hatch" by Antony J. Blinken, November 26, 1984), and now the sponsors are trying again.

THE BIPARTISAN CIVIL RIGHTS Restoration Act of 1985 is exactly the sort of thing the civil rights movement does best. So why is it in so much trouble? Dr. Leslie Wolf of the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, who made an otherwise effective speech about *Grove City* as a "real-life 'Night of the Living Dead,' " provided a small clue. One "specter of racism" that could return to haunt us, she said, was that federally funded hospitals can legally turn away blacks. Another is that "airlines which use federally subsidized airports . . . could . . . refuse to seat blind or deaf passengers in rows next to exits . . ." Now wait a minute. First, there might be good reasons not to seat a blind person next to an exit on an airplane (they take more time to get out in an emergency, and airplanes—even airplanes with fire-retardant fuel—burn very fast). But even if there were no good reasons, it would still be ridiculous to rank this sort of thing with racial discrimination. However, Dr. Wolf needed one "horror story" for each of the groups on her list—blacks, Hispanics, women, the disabled, the elderly—and so she lost perspective. The Democratic party often exhibits a similar tendency.

WE ARE COMING IN for a spate of 40th anniversaries this spring, as politicians and journalists retrace the hard-won steps of the Allies across Germany and the Pacific. In a few weeks they will be in Berlin, and four months later they will reach Tokyo—and Hiroshima. Last week it was the turn of Iwo Jima, and before that, of Yalta, denounced by conservatives as a "blunder" (or worse) by the aging FDR. Well, blunder or no blunder, for 40 years there has been peace in Europe, and when you think about it, that is amazing. Most world-class blunders—Munich, for example—have far worse consequences. Of course, this doesn't make things any easier for the miserable people "represented" by my Rumanian neighbors. Or for their neighbors.

D.A.B.

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